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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MAY 13 1986

UNHOLY ALLIANCE

The new role of Jewish PACs and how they may save the Republican Senate.

by Robert Kuttner

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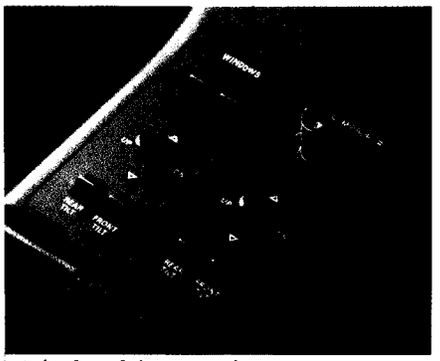

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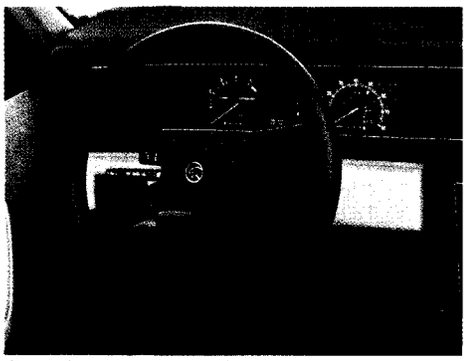

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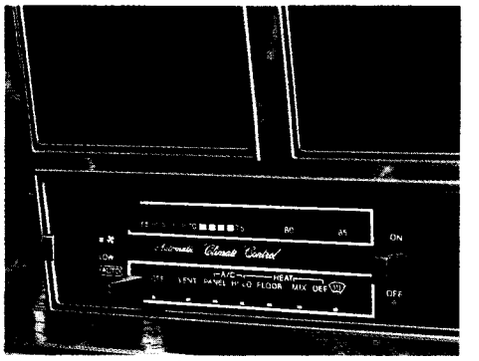

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FROM WASHINGTON

As Bob Packwood Turns

Just three weeks ago he was derided in these pages as "Senator Hackwood" for his appalling sellout of tax reform. Now Finance Committee chairman Bob Packwood has produced an outstanding tax-reform plan that features lower rates than President Reagan's and takes more poor people off the tax rolls than the Democratic House version.

Generations of psychohistorians will ponder what has been going on inside Packwood's head for the past month as he weaved down the policy highway. First he and his committee staged a spectacular two-week orgy of special-interest giveaways to everyone from oil drillers to casket makers (newspaper headline: "Drive to Simplify Taxes Runs Into Complications"). The result would have been a tax code even more complex, unfair, and inefficient than the one we have now. Then, on April 18, he withdrew that bill and announced it was back to "square one" (headline: "Tax Bill Is 'Moribund' "). Next, on April 24, he dramatically proposed a 25 percent top tax rate and virtually no deductions ("Packwood Would Eliminate Itemized Deductions"). The next day, April 25, he called a press conference to declare that this new plan wasn't his at all, it was just a piece of paper handed to him by some fellow he'd run into in the men's room—actually, the staff director of the Joint Tax Committee—and he wasn't sure whether he supported it or not ("Packwood Denies Authoring Flat Tax"). The following week he proposed his current plan ("Packwood, Tax Plan Are Born Again"), and the week after that a dazed Finance Committee had voted its approval.

Some say Packwood heard the clarion call of "statesmanship"—the same one heard last year by House Ways and Means chairman Dan Rostenkowski. Some say he feared that by killing tax reform he was creating an issue for the Democrats in the fall election. If Democrats retake the Senate, Bob Packwood is no longer Finance Committee chairman. Packwood himself insists that after all these years he suddenly underwent a true intellectual conversion, from a belief in tax incentives to a belief that "we ought to get the rates as low as we can, [and] let economic efficiency guide decisions." Whatever the chairman's motivation, we should all rally round quick, before he changes his mind again.

Packwood's plan is a radical version of the basic tax-reform principle: cut out deductions and loopholes and use the saving to reduce marginal rates. Packwood actually manages to preserve the most treasured deductions, such as the ones for mortgage interest and state property taxes, while getting rates down to 15 percent for four-fifths of all taxpayers and 27 percent for the top fifth (families over about $40,000). The corporate rate would drop from 46 percent to 33 percent. Two important features of Packwood's plan that weren't part of earlier versions are a rule to curtail tax shelters and an end to the special break for capital gains. These provisions are going to cause a frenzy of high-powered protest as the bill goes to the Senate floor and then to the Senate-House conference.

Ending the distinction between capital gains and ordinary income is a matter of both fairness and efficiency. Capital gains are three-fifths deductible, meaning that the current top capital gains tax rate is only 20 percent. By contrast the *lowest* tax rate on wage income, including Social Security, is 18 percent (or 23 percent if you include the employer's Social Security contribution as well). Almost half the declared income of people making more than $200,000 a year is in the form of capital gains. And most capital gains of wealthy people are never taxed at all, because of an obscure rule that measures the gain on inherited property from the moment it was inherited, rather than from the moment it was purchased.

But ending the capital gains differential isn't simply a matter of giving wage earners an even break. There are good "supply-side" reasons for it too. High rates aren't the only way the tax system distorts economic incentives and creates inefficiency. The same bad effects come from having different tax rates on different kinds of economic activity. This leads people to invest their money for tax purposes in ways that don't make true economic sense.

In the coming debate, you'll be hearing a lot of mystical mumbo jumbo about capital gains being the seed corn of prosperity. Keep in mind that there is no metaphysical distinction between capital gains and ordinary income. In fact, thanks to the capital gains break, vast energies are devoted to turning the latter into the former. Discouraging people from making economic decisions based on tax considerations is one of the main purposes of tax reform.

Packwood's proposed rule against tax shelters will have the same healthy effect. The key to a tax shelter is generating a lot of paper "losses" and subtracting them from your real income. Packwood's bill would forbid the deduction of most passive investment "losses" except against income from that same investment. (If you make a genuinely bad investment, you'll still be able to deduct your full loss. You just won't be able to deduct *more than* you actually lose.) This change is expected to bring in an extra ten billion dollars a year. Once again, though, the point is not just fairness but efficiency. Many times ten billion dollars a year in capital is misdirected by tax-shelter considerations into wasteful investments that don't make sense for the economy.

The magic elixir that creates phony "losses" is depreciation—the deduction for the wearing out of business buildings and equipment. The overgenerous depreciation rules enacted as part of the 1981 Reagan tax cut created a tax-shelter explosion. These same rules are what have enabled so many corporations to pay little or no income tax over the past few years. The tax bill that passed the House addressed both these problems directly by reforming the depreciation rules. Packwood's bill leaves depreciation intact, along with a variety of special breaks for individual industries. But it prevents individuals from abusing these rules by limiting tax shelters, and it prevents corporations from abusing them through a fairly stiff minimum tax.

To a lot of people who aren't rich, a top income tax rate of 27 percent sounds pretty good. The fact that shutting down tax shelters would bring in billions of dollars in extra revenue, even at 27 percent, shows how many rich people aren't even paying that much at present. From here on out, if anyone opposes tax reform, ask him if his top rate was less than 27 percent last year. Then tell him what yours was.

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CORRESPONDENCE

WORTHWHILE CANADIANS

To the editors:
Week after week, you report with indignation and resentment that many foreign countries are hostile to U.S. interests and sentiments. Often, as a consequence of your analysis, you urge forceful and belligerent action on the part of the Reagan administration. At the same time (Notebook, May 5), you make fun of a *New York Times* article titled "Worthwhile Canadian Initiative" as inherently boring and unworthy of U.S. attention. Since Canada is our largest trading partner and most loyal ally, this seems both unfortunate and sadly symptomatic of the cause of U.S. foreign policy problems.

ROBERT L. SIMONS
Boston, Massachusetts

To the editors:
Although "Worthwhile Canadian Initiative" offended and disappointed me, it did not come as a surprise. Having recently spent four years studying at a U.S. college (in Canada we would say university) heavily populated by readers of THE NEW REPUBLIC, I am well aware that it is a point of honour (or, if you prefer, honor) among the U.S. elite to see Canada as a grey (or, if you must, gray) photocopy of the United States and to know as little as possible about Canadian history, politics, literature, etc.—especially when these differ significantly from those of the U.S. I suggest that this ignorance, rather than Canadian reality, is the source of your boredom.

STEPHEN HENIGHAN
Montreal, Quebec

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

To the editors:
The idea that a German surname could be a hindrance in downstate Illinois is just laughable ("Democracy's Rusty Weapon," April 14). John Peter Altgeld was elected governor in the 1890s. German-descended persons are a plurality in the U.S., according to the 1980 census, and they are by far the largest group in the Midwest. Dirksen received huge majority votes; so did Eisenhower and Hoover. And so did Willkie in the Midwest. In fact, being a "Dutchman" in mid-America is an asset, as columnist William Pfaff has written. It is true there is lingering prejudice against southern Europeans; witness the Cuomo debacle. Even the know-nothings of the 1840s were hostile primarily toward Irish Catholics, not Germans, who in any case were two-thirds Protestant.

BEVERLY C. MEYER
Walnut Creek, California

LIBYAN DISSENTERS

To the editors:
Although I found your editorial "The Response to Terror" (May 5) interesting and informative, I must take exception to your statement that "the president now has behind him . . . a united people." I personally do not support the recent U.S. attack on Libya, and I am sure that many other Americans agree with me. The foray into Libya cannot be classified as anything other than a barbaric strike against a nation that has been only loosely, if at all, connected with any specific incidents of terrorism.

The raid was an ineffectual way to retaliate against terrorism, although it appears to have been an excellent way to satisfy President Reagan's psychological need to "show the world who's boss." I can only hope that the next time the president's adrenaline begins to flow, he will think more responsibly before expending the lives of innocent young men to nourish his belligerent urges.

WILLIAM ANDREW LAURENCE
San Diego, California

TARGETING INNOCENTS

To the editors:
Joseph S. Nye's article "Just Deterrence" (April 21) presents an interesting and coherent set of maxims to employ when reasoning morally about nuclear deterrence. I would, however, question his third maxim: "minimize harm to innocent people." Nye states that "there is little reason to believe that such a 'no-cities' doctrine would seriously weaken deterrence." Here he is in error. From the very first use of nuclear weapons, targets were chosen not for their military value

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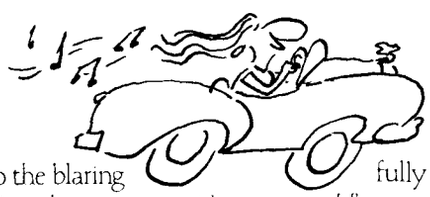
Drive to Dvorak



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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 26, 1986

CHERNOBYL TOO SHALL PASS

Why has sorrow for the Soviet victims been so small a part of the Western reaction of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster? You cried—we cried—for Challenger, say the Soviets. Yet you fume over Chernobyl. Is this not rank anti-Sovietism?

What makes people cry at the death of strangers? Since strangers are dying around the world all the time, we cry over particular deaths if we have some attachment to or knowledge of the victims. In our day the media provide that. The Soviet authorities have done everything to prevent knowledge about this disaster and its victims. We can't see the victims. We don't know who they are. And their official number—two dead and 18 seriously wounded—seems absurdly small. It is hard to muster a wave of national sympathy for an accident half a world away the size of a routine traffic pileup.

From a larger perspective, the reason our sympathy is so difficult to arouse is that, as is the rule for the Soviet Union, the victims are almost impossible to see for the victimizers. The victims, here as always, are ordinary Soviet citizens; the victimizers are the Communist Party authorities who place technological development, Potemkin pretense, and most of all, social control above human life. We have seen nothing of Chernobyl or of the neighboring Kiev. Only those two mannequins on the Soviet TV news announcing—after eight minutes of tractor footage and agricultural production figures (no doubt, the last good ones for several decades), and in a four-line statement more appropriate to a mess hall fire—the largest nuclear catastrophe in history.

It is an exercise in redundancy, but the Chernobyl disaster laid bare the two supreme truths about the Soviet system. First, that the ruled do not count. This is why people-to-people programs between Russians and Americans are so politically irrelevant. Any warm or sympathetic feelings we may have toward the Russian people have nothing to do with our dealings with the regime. And second, that this is a regime built from start to finish on lies. This time the lying began with silence. It wasn't until the Swedes noticed a hundredfold increase in radiation in some parts of the country (Sweden is about 700 miles from the Chernobyl reactor) that the Soviets even admitted that there was a disaster in the first place. Had the wind blown the news (and the harm) toward Moscow and on to Soviet Asia, the world would never have known.

But then again, the Soviets tried to deny the existence of the Korean Air Liner that they shot down. And some of their space accidents are coming to light only now, 30 years later. This is a system built not only on a monopoly of the means of production, but on a monopoly of the means of deduction—that is, information, the raw material for thinking. A Soviet spokesman, revealing more than he intended, explained why the regime did not release any information before Sweden did. We had first to gather the information and assess it before releasing it, he said. As they always do. And if the assessment is negative, the information enters the memory hole where dwell other inconveniences of the past, from Trotsky to America's place in World War II to Chernobyl.

When for purely meteorological reasons denial could no longer be maintained, then a different lie became necessary: it was just a small accident, contained, and receding. Three lies. While the graphite core was still burning, the authorities were denying it and at the same time asking Germany and Sweden for help in putting it out.

The Soviets didn't even give their own citizens (let alone their neighbors' citizens) the kind of warning, information, and advice on precautions that East and West Europeans gave their people: keep children and pregnant women indoors, avoid fresh vegetables and milk, don't drink rainwater, wash your clothes, and take other elementary steps

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to minimize radiation dosage. The Poles reported extremely high radiation levels at their eastern border. The levels must have been even higher in Minsk and the hundreds of other towns in the path between Chernobyl and that border.

While Poland, Rumania, West Germany, Sweden, and others took preventive steps, the Soviets evacuated a few highly contaminated villages around the plant, and turned out thousands (children too) for ostentatious parades on May Day—day five (we think) of the emergency—both in Kiev, upwind from the plant, and Minsk, downwind. It is not just atomic-plant workers at Chernobyl, many of whom have undoubtedly suffered lethal doses of radiation in a reactor with no containment building, who must be sacrificed to the needs of the state.

No surprise here. The Soviets have been sacrificing their own people for reasons of state for 70 years now. But what seems more surprising is that they would sacrifice something more precious to them than life: public relations. Why did they risk the fruits of Gorbachev's charm offensive? Why destroy in a week his growing reputation for openness?

The answer is that we overestimate, as usual, how really high a priority the Soviets put on public relations. It ranks above life, to be sure, but that is not saying much. The Soviets value PR—the moral or the political high ground—when they can get it on the cheap. But when it will cost them Czechoslovakia or Poland or the sanctity of their airspace, or their image of a confident technological power, then they don't give a damn. Only then does it become clear how far above all other values ranks the party's monopoly of power.

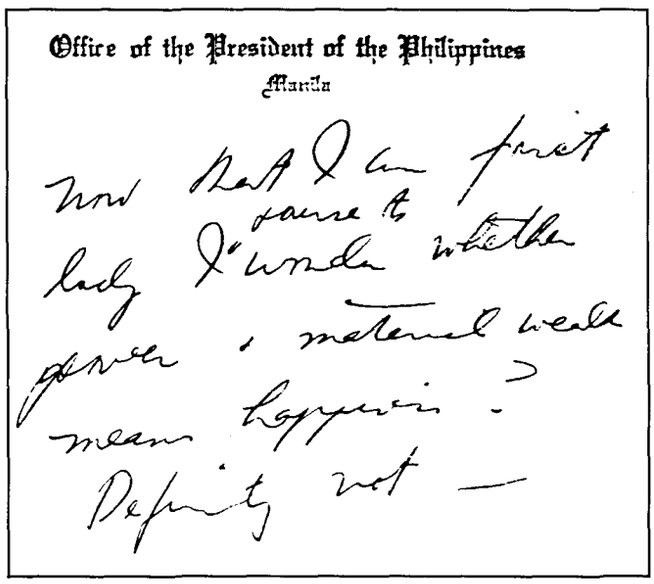
That has been characteristic of the vaunted Gorbachev openness throughout: where he can score easy propaganda victories, like a nuclear test "ban" that coincides with a lull in his testing program, then he will. Or a program to eliminate nuclear weapons by the year 2000. But when it comes to serious compromises, then PR does not rate high. Domestic control ranks far above temporary ill will from Western Europe.

And temporary it will be. The West has a short memory, Gorbachev knows. Who even thinks about Czechoslovakia or Afghanistan or KAL 007? Or that cause so dear to Europe, poor Poland. Jaruzelski has already been to Paris. He is even welcome at the Vatican. Coups, invasions, fallout—these things blow over. What hangs always in the air, on the other hand, is the West's hunger for rapprochement, for good (public) relations, for the next round of good Soviet PR. Watch for Gorbachev, within a month, to waft a new arms control proposal across his Western border.

Chernobyl too shall pass, quickly. The radioactive cloud will dissipate and the sun of political "realism" in relations with the Soviets will soon shine again. After all, we will hear soon again, we mustn't let ideology get in the way of finding a way to live together on this planet. Or as the Soviet spokesman warned, the U.S. reaction to Chernobyl is "poisoning the international atmosphere." No containment buildings for that.

NOTEBOOK

☐ IMELDA BEHIND CLOSED DOORS:


Office of the President of the Philippines
Manila

Now that I am first lady I pause to wonder whether power & material wealth mean happiness? Definitely not —

This note was found in a half-burned pile of documents from the files of Imelda Marcos, rescued from destruction and discovered by an American reporter several days after the overthrow of the Marcos regime. It reads: "Now that I am first lady I pause to wonder whether power and material wealth mean happiness? Definitely not."

☐ DETAILS, DETAILS:

Kremlin Official Offers Details, Says Human Error Was Responsible

—front page, *Washington Post*, May 3

Kremlin, Offering No New Data, Assails West on Nuclear Disaster

—front page, *New York Times*, same day

☐ DEATH THREAT CHIC: To the modern Washington flack, everything is grist for the publicity mill. Last month the terrorist Abu Nidal held a press conference to list some of his potential targets in the United States. Among them was General John K. Singlaub, head of the far-right World Anti-Communist League. The next day, a PR firm representing General Singlaub called this office to ask whether, in light of this threat on his life, we would like an interview with the general.

☐ SOME OF HIS BEST FRIENDS: Representative Robert K. Dornan of California has several times been accused of making anti-Semitic remarks. Anyone who doubted Dornan's love of Jews need look no further than the April 25 edition of *USA Today*, which includes a feature listing the personal

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likes and dislikes of 60 prominent House members. Dornan lists his favorite movie as *Shoah* (a nine-hour French documentary about the Holocaust), his favorite TV show as "Holocaust" (last broadcast six years ago), and his favorite books as "the Bible and Shakespeare's tragedies." Not, we presume, *The Merchant of Venice*.

□ FAT FARM: The government reported that personal income was up an average of 5.3 percent last year, slightly outpacing inflation of 3.8 percent. If you read the papers, you'll never guess which state did the best last year. Give up? Nebraska. According to the Associated Press, "analysts attributed most of the 9 percent increase to large Government purchases of farm commodities."

□ FIRST CAMBODIA, THEN WATERGATE, NOW THIS:

> I have my own test for judging pro-American autocrats. . . . It consists of four questions: (1) Is the autocrat an effective ruler, particularly in bringing about economic prosperity? (2) Is he able to thwart Communists or others who would put the country in the Soviet bloc? (3) Does he allow some human rights? (4) Is his regime the closest thing to representative government possible under the circumstances . . . ?

—TNR senior editor Fred Barnes three months ago in the *American Spectator*.

> To qualify for our support, a friendly non-communist government which does not measure up to our standards of democracy should meet these conditions: (1) While we do not demand perfection . . . we do insist that it must provide some human rights. . . . (2) It must provide competent leadership and particularly economic policies which can lead to progress for the people. (3) It must have a competent military establishment which is able to maintain internal order and contain communist insurgencies. (4) There must not be a better option—a viable non-communist opposition leadership.

—former president Richard Nixon, speaking to the American Newspaper Publishers Association, April 21.

□ MIXED SIGNALS:

Baker Offers Tax Panel His Backing

—*New York Times*, May 1

Treasury Secretary Declines to Endorse Tax Plan

—*Washington Post*, same day

□ DEPARTMENT OF NEWSPEAK: A Washington think tank recently asked to be put on a Department of the Air Force mailing list of available research contracts. In response, the Air Force sent a form letter that began as follows:

> Please be accurate and complete in filling out your application and suffix listing. *We must know if you are a woman-owned, large or small business or a small disadvantaged business* before your name can be added to our mailing list. Please note that a small disadvantaged business is the same as a minority business. Small disadvantaged business is the new name for minority.

The form letter was printed on stationery with the slogan "Strength Through Knowledge" at the bottom.

□ CONGRATULATIONS: Stanley Kauffmann, TNR's movie critic since 1958, has won the fourth annual Edwin Booth Award of the City University of New York. The award is presented to "an individual or organization whose career in some way reflects the interdependence of the professional and academic theatre communities." Stanley, among his many other services to the performing arts, has been a visiting professor in the theater program at the CUNY Graduate Center since 1976.

THE PRESS

BLOATED GLOBE

A FEW YEARS AGO, the *Boston Globe* constructed a huge stained-glass window of a masthead on its editorial page. The names of current editors and executives were enshrined, along with a "We-Shall-Never-Forget-Them" row at the bottom for certain elect ex-editors and ex-officials. This kind of masthead, adopted by the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times* in the last dozen years, is now the mark of those newspapers that think of themselves as true institutions. And what those papers do, the *Globe* is sure to ape. Lately, though, the names and titles have been juggled to hide the fact that today the *Globe* doesn't even have an editor. And there's a gap big enough to throw a Sunday edition through in the listings of editors emeriti, since the most recent editor, Michael Janeway, ousted from his chair, can't be perforce listed among the graceful.

The masthead disarray is especially embarrassing because the *Globe* has Serious Aspirations. With a daily circulation of about 500,000, it calls itself the largest newspaper in New England. A typical front page includes oversize wistful photographs of the seasonal foliage, a picture of various local clergymen shaking hands, a few national stories from the *Washington Post* news service, and invariably, a soft feature on the worsening condition of some bizarre local industry like a New Hampshire winery.

The *Globe*'s obvious troubles surfaced last St. Patrick's Day, the holiest day of the year in Boston, when editor Janeway was dismissed after 14 months in office. Formerly of the *Globe*'s Sunday magazine and the *Atlantic*, Janeway had been the carefully groomed successor to the *Globe*'s storied longtime editor, Thomas Winship. One *Globe* staffer said to me, "It would take the talents of a Henry James to tell the story of what happened at the *Globe*." The talents of Henry's psychologist brother, William, I think, would be

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better suited to the task of unraveling the madness of the *Globe*, which has undergone a number of incarnations as it orbits dizzily through existence.

When I first saw the *Globe* . . . well, let me start on a Sunday in July 1956 in the bosky village of Chocorua, New Hampshire, coincidentally the same spot where the James brothers were wont to summer years earlier. It was then my daily chore to hike down Route 16 to the village each morning to get the newspapers: the *Boston Post*, the *Boston Herald*, the racy *Boston Record*, and on Sundays the *New York Herald Tribune* and the *New York Times*. Never, however, had the *Boston Globe* been one of the appointed papers. But when I walked into Ulely's Store that day, I found there was no *Boston Post*. It had simply folded. Ulely, the village newsie, offered me two alternatives. One was the *Union Leader* from Manchester downstate, the other a paper called the *Boston Globe*. Even a nine-year-old in 1956 knew that the *Union Leader* was strictly for the nuttier natives, so I added the *Boston Globe* to my pile. At home, I laid the papers on the wicker newspaper table on the porch for grandfather to peruse. "My God, boy," he said, glowering down at me when he found the *Globe*, "you've brought me the maid's paper!"

THIS ASSESSMENT, a fairly common one in Boston, was not off the mark. Until 1967, for example, the *Globe* studiously avoided anything as controversial as endorsing candidates for public office. And until about the same time, the paper's lead editorial was signed by, and written in the persona of, "Uncle Dudley," who was given to musing about tree replanting, the meaning of Milk Month in Massachusetts, and whether or not television was just a fad.

In the mid-1960s, however, just about the time the city was undergoing the massive urban redevelopment operation known as the New Boston, Uncle Dudley disappeared. As did the advertisements on page one. The apparent author of these changes, a new editor, one Thomas Winship, nicknamed in-house "Thanks Dad!" in reference to the fact that his immediate predecessor had been his father, Lawrence Winship. "Thanks Dad!" was determined to build a new *Globe* to match the new Boston. He was helped by the fact that a series of bizarre accidents left the maid's paper and the tired old *Herald* (then owned by Hearst) as the only dailies in Boston. If you wanted to know where shoes were on sale and who had died, you had to buy the *Globe*.

Thus raised up from the ranks of the reading for the back stairs, the *Globe* had a peculiar sense of its mission. Some newspapers such as the *New York Times* like to think of themselves as newspapers of record, a transcript of life; others, like the *Washington Post*, are more buoyant, echoing Cosgrove's happy notion that a newspaper ought to be "a map of busy life, its fluctuations, and its vast concerns." Other newspapers, more modestly, try only to report and explain the events of the world.

The *Globe*'s aim under Winship was sloppier, and condescending to its readers. It sought to report only those events of the world that it thought salutary for its readers to know, and then to explain them only in a manner that its editors thought salubrious for the good of the Commonwealth. In September 1975, when Boston schools opened under a court order, the *Globe* headlined the opening day "Boston Schools Desegregated, Opening Day Generally Peaceful." In fact, as the *New York Times* and the television networks reported, it was a violent, rock-throwing day, a day of pure hate in South Boston, the one place that counted. The *Globe* later received a Pulitzer Prize for its busing coverage, a fact that once and for all convinced me that the newspaper Pulitzers are awarded out of a cozy sense of comradeship, not out of any concern for the ideals espoused by Joseph Pulitzer.

"Elfin and modest," as *Time* put it last year when Winship retired, he was given to bright shirts, bright bow ties, and a hayseed's suspenders. He was an admirer of the sartorial style of Ben Bradlee, the editor of the *Washington Post*. (A friend at a Washington party once heard Winship publicly covet a pair of Bradlee's suspenders.) But Winship's weakness for a touch of the fields ruined the effect. Ultimately Winship was Mortimer Snerd to Bradlee's Charlie McCarthy.

WINSHIP'S OFFICE was filled with wooden kitchen tables, Priscilla rockers, and if memory serves, braided throw rugs and other gimcrackery. It was like a museum of 19th-century New Englandiana. In fact, Winship had been raised in a museum. In the 1930s the nostalgia-obsessed Henry Ford had constructed a village of 19th-century New England buildings in Sudbury, Massachusetts. To make his theme park complete, he arranged for small children to be taught at a schoolhouse there. For six years the future editor of the *Globe* attended classes in a fashionable freak show.

To many, particularly the good reporters who came to the *Globe* and quickly left, that's exactly what Winship was: an exhibit of an editor, not a real one. Years into the job, he didn't know enough about making up a page to be able to order a headline by typeface and size. "Gimme one of those big ones" was about as precise as Winship could get, according to a former editor.

Winship constantly visited journalists' conventions. At each one he had some new exhibit to boast about. In the early 1970s it was a horde of youthful reporters whom Winship called "my city room Weathermen." To those of us journalists who were already familiar with Weathermen, real radicals, and real radical journalists, the appellation was, like the *Globe* itself, galling. "Country-club hippies" would have more accurately described his sanitized John Reeds.

Another year it was a series of hectoring editorials written by one Anne Cabot Wyman, proudly billed as the direct descendant of Puritans. For months she and other self-righteous preachers wagged their bony fingers at the citizens of Boston about busing, willfully ignoring the societal hypocrisy that made the city suffer the burdens while the suburbs went untouched. For all their badgering of the people of Boston, Winship and most of his

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showboating hierarchy had never lived in the city.

The *Globe* also covered national politics extensively, sending reporters out with almost every major candidate for the presidency from the start of the primaries to election night. This too helped secure the *Globe*'s outsize reputation, since nothing impresses expense-account-loving journalists more than a newspaper that is willing to finance a year's travel, hotel living, self-conscious complaining, and fatuous writing every time there's a presidential election.

The massiveness of the *Globe* sports section also excited the praise of other editors. But here again, they were praising articles, features, and segments they didn't have to read on a daily basis. The *Globe*'s sports columnists, in fact, eschewed reporting for a befogging wistfulness that the rest of the nation has to endure only occasionally, say, when George ("I don't throw like a girl") Will writes one of his baseball pieces.

The *Globe*'s ability to miss the point, not to mention the scoop, is impressive. Last year I was writing about the 1984 murder of a Boston prostitute by a ghostly Tufts professor, and ordered copies of the *Globe* and *Herald* for the day on which the prof's arrest would have been reported. The *Herald*'s stories were packed with quotes and an array of details, including accounts of the final moments of the girl's life, interviews with the police who broke the case, and side stories on many ironies in the case. The *Globe* had one story: an interview with a Harvard law school professor on legal issues in the arrest.

IN DECEMBER 1984 Winship was forced into retirement at age 65. *Time*'s piece was fulsome: "Last week the era came to a subdued close, . . ." etc., etc. (It was written by a former *Globe* staffer.) Winship was somewhat bitter over the shove, but he should have thanked his numerous lucky stars. He got out just in time. And poor Michael Janeway took over just in time for the charade to end.

Libel suits popped up, occupying much of the new editor's time. Then it was discovered that a columnist, hired by Winship, had been using his editorial position to advance his business interests. He was dismissed in a scandal. Under the new ownership of Rupert Murdoch, the *Herald*'s circulation and advertising increased as well. As Janeway grew more and more distant, the *Globe*'s newsroom, always emotionally more akin to a seventh-grade homeroom than to the nerve center of a news-gathering institution, erupted into a carnival of bad feeling. Writers cried that Winship was not there to tuck them in. Editors who had been passed over for the top job began second-guessing Janeway's every move.

And on March 17 Janeway was out. His second-in-command, executive editor Jack Driscoll, was told to run the paper. Driscoll promised to "regionalize" the paper. And thus on April 21, when the world was in riot with terrorist attacks and retaliatory raids, the leading headline in the *Globe* chortled, NORTH SHORE AND SOUTH SHORE: NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET. One paragraph read: "Just where the stereotypes begin and end is also uncertain. North Shore residents consider the South Shore marshy, nondescript, largely Irish and traditionless, South Shore denizens alternately consider the North Shore snobbish, Yankee and Republican or ethnic, industrial and crime-ridden. These stereotypes are superficial, but enduring."

The good old *Globe*, through change and through crisis, always vapid and foggy, witless and factless, pretentious and boring.

P. J. CORKERY

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WHITE HOUSE WATCH

LEAK SOUP

NOTHING extraordinary on the Washington news front on Tuesday, April 29. Only the normal volume of leaks. The Associated Press, quoting "Pentagon sources," reported that the administration had dispatched a third aircraft carrier to the Mediterranean, where Libya's been acting up. The *New York Times* disclosed a foreign policy zag by the Reagan administration, namely a plan to terminate the American military alliance with New Zealand if that country bars visits by nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered ships. This information was attributed to unnamed "State Department officials." The *Wall Street Journal*, meanwhile, reported that a confidential Pentagon study had raised doubts about the cost-effectiveness of the Lavi, the new jet fighter that Israel is developing with U.S. financing.

Oh, yes. Tuesday, April 29, was also the day that Michael E. Pillsbury got canned as assistant under secretary of defense for policy planning. The firing offense: leaking sensitive national security information to the press. Pillsbury was accused of informing the *Washington Post* and columnists Evans and Novak of the administration's decision, privately reached and never announced, to send American-made Stinger missiles to anticommunist rebels in Angola and Afghanistan. Defense officials told the *New York Times* that Pillsbury had flunked a lie detector test when asked about the Stinger leak. The Pentagon was feeling downright huffy. "Senior policymakers had become increasingly irritated by the appearance of information in the press about Libya and a large variety of the administration's covert programs," the *Times* was told.

President Reagan rails against leakers at his nationally televised press conferences. Nevertheless, the firing of Pillsbury is world-class hypocrisy. I haven't the slightest idea whether Pillsbury leaked or not. But suppose he did. If

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every leaker in the administration were to get the Pillsbury treatment, Reagan would have to fire practically his entire Cabinet and senior staff, and possibly resign himself. No administration really opposes all unofficial, anonymous disclosure of government information ("leaks"). That includes this one, which wants greatly expanded use of lie detectors to prevent leaking. What every administration opposes are leaks that don't serve its own purposes.

If the political system in the Soviet Union is built on lies, as Reagan is fond of reminding us, his own administration is built on leaks. O.K., O.K. Not entirely built on leaks, but an incredible amount of information is conveyed to the American public through leaks. And guess who does most of the leaking, especially of national security information such as an aircraft carrier movement, a policy shift on New Zealand, or an evaluation of a jet fighter? Senior officials at the White House, Pentagon, State Department, and CIA, that's who. These are the same folks who are now "increasingly irritated" by leaks about Libya and covert aid to anticommunist guerrillas.

The *Washington Post* reported May 7 that CIA director William Casey had threatened it with prosecution under a 1950 law against revealing secret codes and other "communications intelligence activity" if it published a planned article about the CIA. He threatened criminal prosecution of four other news organizations as well under this rarely used law. In 1983 the administration issued a national security directive requiring every federal employee with a security clearance to submit to lie detector tests. Last year the administration used espionage laws to convict and imprison a naval intelligence analyst, Samuel Loring Morison, for leaking satellite photos to a British magazine. Yet throughout this whole campaign, high officials of this same administration have been leaking the very same sort of material.

PRESIDENTS LEAK. Jimmy Carter once held an off-the-record session with a dozen reporters under a tree on the South Lawn of the White House. It was hot and lemonade was served. Of course, nothing is ever really off-the-record, as Carter had to know, and all the tidbits he dispensed got out quickly. Reagan's tack is different. He takes secrets of the highest security classification and reveals them in his speeches. In a talk on Grenada, he used satellite photographs to show ominous military construction. More recently, Reagan ignored the objections of the intelligence community and announced how the United States got wind of the Libyan terrorist scheming that culminated in the Berlin disco bombing on April 5. It was through a radio intercept. This let the Libyans know we'd cracked their code. It alerted the Soviets, Syrians, East Germans, and everyone else too. My guess is they piped down fast, a large loss for American intelligence gathering. Reagan's own leak about a radio intercept is a perfect example of the kind of "communications intelligence activity" protected by the law that the administration wants to use to prosecute the *Washington Post*.

There are three types of leaks—policy leaks, what might be called anti-policy leaks, and old-fashioned loose-tongue leaks. Policy leaks are handled by top officials or by their surrogates. These leaks are designed to promote an administration policy. High government officials spend hours every day plotting how to affect the "spin," or presentation, of news stories. The strategic leak is a key part of "spin control." When Reagan decided to say how we learned about the Libyan plans, he did so to buttress his decision to bomb Libya. After Reagan decided in April to continue adherence to the SALT II treaty by scrapping two Poseidon submarines, several reporters at the State Department were quickly informed. There was no public announcement, only leaked information, just as in the Stinger case in which Pillsbury is accused. The same was true of the shift in policy toward New Zealand.

YES, THERE'S a legitimate distinction between leaks of delicate national security information and leaks of less sensitive stuff. But the biggest jeopardizer of national security is the administration itself. In the week before the bombing raid on Libya, the administration fed story after story to reporters about the military options under consideration. The television networks had time to produce fancy graphics to depict each option. If this didn't give Muammar al-Qaddafi the idea that something was up, nothing would have.

The classic example of a vital government secret is information about military movements—troop deployments, plane departures, warship formations. When the press disclosed last summer that the anti-commando Delta Force had been sent to the Mediterranean during the TWA 847 hijacking, the administration was beside itself. That leak was apparently unauthorized. Ten months later the administration leaked word that aircraft carriers are massing again in the Med. This was authorized, the aim being to tell Qaddafi not to try anything.

One variation of the policy leak is a Reagan administration specialty. This is the more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger leak by a top official to the effect that some subordinate embroiled in controversy had better pack his bags. The drift is usually that while the case against the subordinate is flimsy, he or she ought to resign pronto to avoid hurting the president. This line was leaked to reporters at the White House in the cases of National Security Adviser Richard Allen and Anne Burford, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. They both eventually quit. In Allen's case, a twist was added. It was leaked that First Lady Nancy Reagan was upset by the controversy over Allen and wanted him out. But an official doesn't have to be accused of wrongdoing to get this treatment. Well before William Clark quit as national security adviser in 1983, officials at the White House were systematically trashing him in the press. The same has been happening for a year or more to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

It's the anti-policy leaks that drive Reagan and his closest advisers nuts. That story raising questions about the Israeli jet fighter was an example of an anti-policy leak: the likely source was Pentagon officials who object to Ameri-

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can funding of a foreign plane. As budget director, David Stockman was adept at putting out embarrassing deficit projections and fueling momentum for a tax increase. He did so "on background," which is the ground rule under which officials often speak to reporters. This means the information can be attributed to an "administration official" or "White House official" or "Pentagon source." There is also "deep background," under which no attribution at all can be used. This leads to awkward phrases like "it was understood that . . ." or "The Times has learned . . ." Stockman exploited these conventions of Washington journalism to air his dissident policy advice. So have officials who want Reagan to negotiate limits on Star Wars. Before last fall's summit, they leaked stories that Star Wars was negotiable at Geneva, hoping to create pressure for exactly that outcome. Didn't work.

Loose-tongue leaks, where the motive has nothing to do with either promoting or subverting official policy, are probably the most common of all. These leaks happen mostly because people like to talk, and some journalists are skilled at exploiting this human foible. Loose-tongue leaks have even come my way. As a reporter for the *Washington Star* in 1973, just elevated from the local staff, I was assigned to the Senate Watergate hearings. The first day I dropped by the office of a senator's press secretary. I scarcely knew the guy, but he gave me a copy of secret testimony by a Nixon aide. All I'd done was ask about staff interviews of White House officials.

Most officials are honest. If you ask them a question, they'll answer it. Then, too, talking "on background" about vital matters of state makes people feel important. Sometimes officials are eager to curry a reporter's favor, though I can't remember this happening to me. And sometimes they want to take a poke at a rival in government, or simply at someone they don't like. This is how *Newsweek* broke the story that Mike Deaver, then a White House official, was using diplomatic credentials to buy a BMW in Germany at a cut-rate price while advancing a Reagan trip to Europe. A State Department minion ratted.

THERE'S A RISK for journalists in exaggerating the importance of leaks. Reporters can be fooled into thinking they're getting a hot tip when they aren't. In 1982 a White House official invited me to lunch. Hmmm, I thought, he's got something to leak. To my delight, he told me about plans for a new presidential commission to investigate organized crime. I later learned this had been reported a week before. I'd missed the story. A worse situation is when officials, eager to show they're in the stream of knowledge, tell you more than they know. Once an official in a position to know told me that a controversial U.S. attorney was not going to be reappointed. I reported that. It turned out that while the official was in a position to know, he didn't. The prosecutor was reappointed.

Pillsbury's problem, assuming he leaked, wasn't that he was wrong about the Stingers. His problem was that he was right. In his case, this makes the leak all the more innocuous. Who, after all, was the information being hidden from? The Angolans and Afghans and Soviets and Cubans would soon know the truth anyway. They'd see the Stingers being used against their aircraft. As with most things the government would like to keep secret, the concern was how the information would affect the political debate in this country, rather than how it might affect our military goals abroad.

Anyway, reporters covering the wars in Angola and Afghanistan also would have learned about the Stingers once they were put into use. So what was Pillsbury's crime? He spoke too soon, and without official authorization. The day he departed the Defense Department, I chatted with a young conservative who had just returned from conferring in Angola with the anticommunist rebels. Had the Stingers gotten there? I asked. Oh sure, he said, without hesitation. You couldn't miss them.

FRED BARNES

THE MONEY CULTURE

BEING THERE

ONE OF THE BEST ways to make money is to be standing around when large sums of cash are changing hands. By this principle, real estate agents, probate lawyers, and valet parking attendants at racetracks get rich: "Gee, thanks, mister!"

Today's most successful practitioners of the art of Being There are investment bankers. When a deal involves billions, no one is going to miss a few millions. Last October, for example, when Monsanto bought G. D. Searle for $2.7 billion, Goldman, Sachs was paid eight million dollars in fees, Morgan Stanley got $6.3 million, and William Blair got $1.8 million. When Revlon was sold to Pantry Pride for $1.8 billion in December, Lazard Frères made $12.8 million, Drexel Burnham Lambert $5.5 million, and Morgan Stanley six million dollars. To understand just how lucrative the Being There racket is, look at the firm of Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts & Co. KKR is a company with two businesses: it buys other companies and it plays investment banker. In fact, it plays investment banker on its own acquisitions. When KKR bought Storer Communications last December for $2.3 billion, it paid itself $23 million as an investment banking fee. It will take a long time for Storer to yield KKR as much money as just brokering the deal did.

Facilitating, skid-greasing, whatever you want to call it, as always been an important American industry. "I put people together" was the way a rich man of no readily identifiable profession once described to me what he did for a living. It sounded like a great job. Today, with the

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advent of the leveraged buy-out—a means of purchasing companies through loans (often "junk bonds") that are repaid with the purchased companies' own profits—deals have grown enormous. So have the fees of the skid-greasers. In 1972 there were only 15 acquisitions of companies costing $100 million or more. Last year there were more than 400. In fact, the 15th-largest transaction was for $1.8 billion. In all, in 1985 some $200 billion was spent by companies to acquire other companies. And the merger and acquisition (M&A) departments of the three leading firms—Goldman, Sachs; First Boston; and Morgan Stanley—each earned more than $200 million in fees. Never have so few earned so much by doing so little.

The lure of this lucre has not been lost on the youth of America. The post-Watergate, post-recession go-getter generation has a nose for cash. First, they filled up the medical schools, then they became lawyers, then McKinsey-style management consultants. Today the best and the brightest are becoming investment bankers. For a simple reason: that's where the money is. A First Boston associate, hired out of business school or law school, will make $50,000 in his or her first full year, plus a bonus of 50 to 100 percent of that salary. Kidder Peabody is reported to be promising $90,000 a year for new associates, and Drexel holds out the chance of making $110,000 (which includes a bonus). In order to compete, law firms have recently raised starting salaries for associates by as much as 25 percent. Cravath, Swaine & Moore, the fancy New York firm that represents IBM, now pays beginning lawyers $65,000 a year, up from $53,000 in 1985. "There's been a steady stream of good people departing for the investment banks, and it's become a source of concern," one Cravath partner told the *New York Times*.

BUT THE LAW firms can't compete with the top investment banking firms in the long run. "As an associate, I'll get a starting salary that's lower than my classmates' who go to Cravath," says a law school senior who has accepted a job with a top investment banking house. "But I'll be getting a much larger bonus at the end of 1987. At an investment bank, if you're not making six figures by the end of your first 12 months, then you're on the slow track. By the third year, an investment banking associate should be getting double his first-year compensation. That almost never happens at a law firm." A fifth-year associate at a large New York law firm makes between $68,000 and $90,000, reports the *Times*. His counterpart at an investment banking firm makes three times that amount or more. Managing directors at investment banks—the equivalent of partners at law firms—are usually paid a base salary of around $100,000, with bonuses frequently running six to seven times that figure.

Investment bankers work for negotiated fees of one-half to one full percentage point on deals above $100 million. This is where the Being There principle comes in. Lawyers—the fools—charge by the hour. Legal work on takeovers is sometimes charged at "multiples of time," that is, double or triple normal rates, but the final figures rarely come close to what investment bankers get. The First Boston group that worked on the Texaco-Getty deal—only a handful of bankers—earned a collective $125,000 an hour.

Lawyers these days are also burdened by a good deal of competition. But there are no more than ten or eleven investment banking firms that are major players in the M&A game. In addition to the big three—Goldman, Morgan, and First Boston—you can count in Merrill Lynch, Drexel, Salomon Brothers, Kidder Peabody (moving up fast), E. F. Hutton, Dillon Read, and perhaps Lazard and Shearson Lehman. Unlike lawyers, investment bankers understand economics. They realize that their oligopoly won't last forever. Competition will increase, especially without a guild to limit supply. The days of the big bucks in investment banking may be numbered—which is why so many are so intent on getting theirs now.

INVESTMENT BANKING firms do a lot more than buy and sell huge corporations. They package new kinds of securities (collateralized mortgages and car loans are the hot items lately), finance real estate ventures, and trade stocks and bonds around the world at all hours. But M&A is where the money and the excitement are these days—although even at a firm like First Boston, the M&A department comprises only about 40 percent of the professionals in the house. M&A has little to do with either banking or investing. "It's an advisory business," says one of the top practitioners of the craft, who, like most of his peers, is in his late 30s. "We help buyers figure out what to buy, help them evaluate a company, negotiate, get financing. . . . We might also initiate a transaction. That is, we try to get the seller to sell even if he hasn't thought about it first."

With the huge fees involved, there's no doubt that some investment bankers are resorting to chicanery to stir up business. The *Wall Street Journal* reported last month that an executive of Beatrice Cos. claimed that Bruce Wasserstein, co-head of M&A at First Boston, told him, "I put you in play." This, said the *Journal*, "is Wall Street lingo for a company that has been turned into a takeover target." The Beatrice executive interpreted this and later comments from Wasserstein "as a threat, as meaning that if they didn't hire First Boston to defend the giant food company, the securities firm would find someone to take it over." Wasserstein denied the charge.

But don't give investment bankers too much credit. "We trigger less than ten percent, or even five percent, of all transactions," says a managing partner in M&A. "The fact is that most mergers don't work out," one of the smartest men on Wall Street once told me. "The main reason mergers occur is to satisfy the ego of the CEO. The role of the investment banker is to egg the CEO on."

It's true that, like most middlemen, investment bankers are rarely very concerned about the consequences of the deals they make. Does it pain Goldman, Sachs that its client Monsanto paid more than five times book value for G. D. Searle? Does it bother First Boston that its client Du Pont bought Conoco for eight billion dollars shortly before the bottom dropped out of the oil market? There

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are few conspicuous successes in the merger game. Big corporations tend to buy other big corporations at the top of the market: U.S. Steel and Marathon, Mobil and Marcor, Texaco and Getty, etc., etc. Most CEOs lack the nerve to buy a company when the price is right, when it's flat on its back—too difficult to explain the purchase to stockholders.

In an "advisory" business, salesmanship is important. Young associates at one investment banking house are reminded that, if their firm is asked to help sell off a sluggish subsidiary of a big corporation, they shouldn't be too quick to ridicule the investment banking firm that sold the subsidiary to the corporation in the first place: "We're told to check the files before we say anything. After all, *we* might have sold them that dog."

THUS ARE America's best minds being placed into the service of the M&A departments of Goldman and Morgan. The usual route is for liberal arts graduates of tony colleges to go into two-year programs for "analysts." First-year salary is usually around $25,000, second-year $50,000. The work involves compiling—and sometimes even analyzing—information on takeover targets, companies up for sale, or companies looking for financing. Analysts compose memos and prepare client presentations on the fine points of particular acquisitions. They also frequently put in all-nighters at financial printing houses, proofreading prospectuses. "Basically, for two years they get ground into dust," says an associate. Then they leave to get their MBAs, hoping to return to their firms as $100,000-a-year associates. Sound like fun? Last year, of the 1,250 seniors at Yale, 400 applied for analyst positions at First Boston alone.

Analysts, associates, vice presidents, and even managing directors at investment banking firms work hard—generally harder than their peers in law firms. By the third or fourth year, associates are expected to bring in new clients. At law firms usually only a few partners spend time soliciting business; at investment banking firms everyone is expected to be a rainmaker. "Associates work seven-day weeks," says one of them. "I'm at work by 7:30 in the morning and I'm sometimes there until midnight. Eight o'clock is an early night. You get some time off on Sunday, but by noon there are lots of people in the office." Those of us who realized too late that Being There was the best revenge can take some solace in the fact that investment bankers are too exhausted to enjoy their money.

These aren't venal goons. These are smart folks, among the most thoughtful you'll ever want to meet. Is it their fault that they aren't being productive or creative in the usual social and moral sense of those terms? The way capitalism is supposed to function, the smartest, hardest-working people get the biggest rewards. Investment bankers are getting those rewards by slightly rearranging the ownership of certain assets. It seems, to put it mildly, a waste.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN

A national forest on the block.

CHOP CHOP

THE REAGAN administration has pledged to run the government like a business, and frequently expresses its belief in free-market principles. Yet 4,000 miles from Washington, deep in an ancient Alaskan rain forest, in an attempt to challenge the wisdom of the market, the government is running a business that loses 93 cents on every dollar it spends. The losses are more than $50 million a year. Meanwhile, this logging operation, under the supervision of the U.S. Forest Service, is destroying the only largely intact rain forest left in the world's temperate zones. The purpose of the exercise is to create a timber industry in southeast Alaska, and it's failing at that as well.

This particular boondoggle started innocently enough. Southeast Alaska is a 500-mile panhandle running along the Pacific Ocean. Eighty percent of it lies in the Tongass National Forest, at 16.8 million acres the largest of our 155 national forests. Ever since the early 1900s, the federal government has seen timbering as an ideal way to attract warm bodies to this cold, wet, and isolated piece of America that would be only a two-day drive (if there were roads) from the Soviet Union.

Early efforts were a bust. Finally, in the 1950s, the Forest Service convinced two large pulp companies to set up shop in Southeast. Among the inducements were 50-year contracts and bargain-basement timber prices, so that they could compete against mills in Washington state. The market for the forest's output was Japan, with small percentages going to other Pacific Rim countries. The pulp-grade timber, about 60 percent of the average Tongass clear-cutting, ultimately was turned into rayon and cellophane. The rest of the timber was turned into logs for use in housing construction and special items such as pianos.

Though demand was reasonably strong, the federal government lost money in this job-creating venture. The costs of doing any kind of business in Alaska are high, and the cost of timber cutting is higher still. An average mile of road built to reach the trees costs $150,000. To make the undertaking profitable for the companies, the government had to provide a large subsidy.

In 1980 this timber program was enshrined in an act of Congress. Republican senator Ted Stevens of Alaska was among those unhappy that the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) proposed to preserve 5.4 million acres of the Tongass as wilderness. When Jimmy Carter was defeated by Ronald Reagan, Stevens and his allies suddenly had a lot of leverage in the shaping of this long and complex bill. The bill's backers desperately wanted to get the bill signed before Carter was replaced by the man who thought that trees cause pollution. Stevens took full advantage of this leverage.

The result was section 705. It set a goal of selling 4.5 billion board feet from the Tongass per decade, roughly

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one percent of the nation's total output. To cover the Forest Service's costs of building roads, surveying, and overhead, the section provides a minimum $40 million *permanent* annual appropriation, "or as much as the Secretary of Agriculture finds is necessary," to meet the supply goal.

MEANWHILE, the market was going down the tubes. Modern technology had found that synthetic substitutes were cheaper than wood pulp for making sandwich wrappers and rayon shirts. Countries such as South Africa, where trees grow more quickly and are easier to harvest, were able to underbid Alaska for the remaining demand.

Timber jobs in Southeast began to dry up. Since passage of ANILCA in 1980, they have declined by 40 percent, to fewer than 1,800. In 1984 the demand for board feet was less than half of the 450 million feet mandated by section 705. Undeterred, the Forest Service squandered $11 million on roads and other preparatory steps for timber sales that no timber company bid on. For each job created by the Tongass timber program, U.S. taxpayers are kicking in $36,000 a year. The two prime beneficiaries of this largess are the Louisiana Pacific Corporation and the Alaska Pulp Corporation, which is Japanese-owned.

Even in southeast Alaska, the Forest Service's enthusiasm for timber cutting is not universally appreciated. Commercial fishermen have been in Washington this month telling Congress that the logging and road building have caused erosion that is damaging the area's world-famous salmon spawning beds. Log transfer facilities along the shore have forced out fishing fleets, while wayward logs floating in the network of straits too often punch holes in individual boats. Southeast's fishing industry provides twice as many jobs as the timber industry does—without any federal subsidy. The logging also threatens tourism, the region's fastest-growing industry, already creating more jobs than either logging or fishing.

Compounding the economic insanity is the splendor of the resource being destroyed. The Tongass features thousands of lakes, islands, and streams. There are alpine meadows and fjords, against a backdrop of snowcapped mountains. Then there are the trees. Sitka spruce, seedlings when Charlemagne was establishing the Holy Roman Empire, soar 250 feet into the sky. Within this rare rain forest are the largest concentrations of bald eagles and grizzly bears anywhere in the world.

The Forest Service stubbornly persists in believing that the timber program is good for the local economy. That has been the agency's operating premise for three-quarters of a century, and such long-held views are hard to change. The Forest Service is a 38,000-employee bureaucracy. Since the advent of the post-World War II housing boom, the national forests have supplied about 20 percent of the nation's timber. The Forest Service has staffed up with surveyors, road engineers, and others who move up the ranks by putting lots of board feet on the scoreboard. Convincing them that it all makes no economic sense is all but impossible.

This is a problem not only in Alaska. Two years ago studies by the General Accounting Office, the Congressional Research Service, and the Wilderness Society revealed that timber programs in many of our national forests are costing the taxpayers more than what timber companies are paying for the wood. This year's presidential budget report figured the fiscal 1986 loss at $600 million. The Forest Service conceded that 37 percent of its timber is being sold at prices below cost, but insisted that there were benefits, such as improving the habitat for deer.

But the Tongass is the only forest with a money-losing timber program written into the law. The Tongass is also a special case because of its biological uniqueness. Fortunately, section 706 of ANILCA calls for a review of the program after five years. The House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee has just completed two days of oversight hearings. This summer's review of the Tongass timber boondoggle gives us a chance to save money, save nature, and save face.

BENNETT H. BEACH

Bennett H. Beach is assistant director of public affairs at the Wilderness Society.

Sick of Stockman and LaRouche.

POLITICAL AIDS

Political life in this century has been much influenced by esoteric and even concealed ideological movements. In common usage, ideology is taken to mean opinion, perhaps strongly held opinion. But it is something more: a kind of secular religion. As a largely apolitical society, the United States has not generated much by way of ideology. Various institutions, such as the labor unions, have had to ward off assault from assorted Marxist movements. But our political parties have been left largely untroubled. Now, though, this is changing. Our ideological immune system is not working very well in either party.

First the Democrats. The neo-fascist, Jew-baiting, conspiratorial ideas of Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. pose an extraordinary danger to the Democratic Party. Not only have LaRouche candidates won the primary victories for lieutenant governor and secretary of state in Illinois, but this faction has made its way virtually unopposed into the Democratic congressional campaigns across the country.

This latest phase in the LaRouche movement began in New York City in 1981, when a LaRouche candidate entered the Democratic primary contest for mayor and was afforded all the honors and dignities attendant upon a legitimate aspirant to the party's nomination. This gave LaRouche a previously unimaginable legitimacy. John

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LoCicero, a political strategist for Mayor Koch in the 1981 campaign, said the LaRouche candidate's bona fides wasn't challenged because "it's not part of the democratic process." This is an honorable sentiment but calamitously wrong. The level of political literacy among the New York Democratic leaders was so low that no one understood who the LaRouchies were. They spoke a political language that the political classes of the city simply did not understand. When the LaRouche candidate was challenged by another "insurgent," on the ground of non-adherence to the principles of the Democratic Party, a state judge ruled that such a charge had to come from a party official. Which did not happen.

In 1982 a LaRouche candidate announced he would challenge me in the Democratic senatorial primary. We fought him from day one. A group of high-minded New Yorkers had formed what Hodding Carter calls a "Fair Play for LaRouche Committee." This outfit suggested that my campaign manager, Tim Russert, had engaged in unfair campaign practices when he called the LaRouche movement "anti-Semitic." Our battle may have seemed quixotic to the political classes. They are rarely comfortable with ideological battle (which is more a disability than a dishonor). We declared that ideas matter to us, and I think the voters responded that ideas matter to them as well. We won handily.

95 THESES AGAINST THE USE OF POLITICAL INDULGENCES
SOLA SCRIPTURA DEOLOGICA
WITH APOLOGIES TO
Luther
WHO NEVER EVEN GOT A BOOK CONTRACT

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

And now to the Republican Party. I argued in these pages two-and-a-half years ago ("Reagan's Bankrupt Budget," December 31, 1983) that the unprecedented triple-digit deficits beginning in President Reagan's second year in office were deliberately created to force a great reduction in the size and activities of the federal government. Few believed me. More, perhaps, believed Friedrich von Hayek, mentor to a generation of conservative economists. Asked about our deficits by an Austrian magazine, von Hayek said in 1985 that he regretted them, but added:

> . . . one of Reagan's advisers told me why the President has permitted [the deficits] to happen, which makes the matter partly excusable: Reagan thinks it is impossible to persuade Congress that expenditures must be reduced unless one creates deficits so large that absolutely everyone becomes convinced that no more money can be spent.

The disaster was not deliberate; the deficits were. The deficits were meant to spur action, but didn't, thereby resulting in disaster. We now have David Stockman's memoirs, *The Triumph of Politics: Why the Reagan Revolution Failed*, which I believe confirm the theory.

The story: young David Stockman becomes a close adviser to the Reagan election campaign of 1980 and will soon be nominated to be director of the Office of Management and Budget. He is part of a foursome, along with Representative Jack Kemp, economist Arthur Laffer, and businessman Lewis Lehrman. They are advocates of "supply-side" economics, a school that proposes to stimulate the economy through private rather than public spending. To that end the foursome advocates large tax cuts.

These are heady young intellectuals. They can scarcely contain their energy or enthusiasm. But trouble soon appears within the group. Dr. Laffer's celebrated curve purports to demonstrate that tax cuts will generate so much additional revenue through the stimulated private economy that no reduction in government spending will be necessary to balance the budget. Young Stockman, however, wants to reduce spending: he is against big government *on principle*. In late August and September of 1980, Stockman begins to realize that the various theories scribbled on the supply-siders' napkins add up to an economic program far more radical than he had realized:

> If you implemented the Gold Standard Napkin and stopped inflation, Professor Laffer's Tax Cut Napkin didn't work. You would get more real economic growth but no gain in federal revenues. Consequently, only sweeping domestic spending cuts could balance the budget—an action that I believed was desirable but which the other supply siders had denied would be necessary.

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At its 1980 convention, the Republican Party endorses both a 30 percent tax cut and a radical reduction in business taxes through more generous depreciation rules. Stockman discovers that to balance the budget, more than $100 billion per year in spending cuts will be necessary. Far from giving Stockman pause, though, the arithmetic excites him. It will force Congress to cut, and cut everywhere. "The idea of a real fiscal revolution, a frontal attack on the welfare state, was beginning to seem more and more plausible."

Enter, alas, the politicians, most notably Ronald Reagan. "The Cabinet was not disposed to . . . [a] patient attack on spending," Stockman notes, adding that "the President never had the foggiest notion." Stockman now admits it was his fault not to have anticipated such a response. But at the time he saw it entirely as a failure on the part of the politicians. In his zeal, and zeal shines through his memoir, he could not imagine that they would not do what he had made it necessary for them to do. Well, they didn't and the rest is history.

THE POINT IS: *Capitalism had become an ideology.* Stockman's vocabulary is replete with terms we associate with ideology, with an intense belief system, a secular religion. He describes his migration from the student left, SDS and suchlike, to the Republican right in terms that are legitimately intellectual. But at times he also clearly crosses the line dividing measured judgment from radical conviction. He cites authors of meticulous clarity and caution with that element of fervor we associate with zealotry and even intolerance.

Because of his near-addiction to it, Stockman is an absorbing figure to a student of ideology. He goes on as if the Reaganites had appointed him a kind of party theorist responsible for doctrinal conformity. He describes the "organs of international aid" such as the World Bank as "infested with socialist error." He gives one chapter the title "The Coming of the New Order." He recalls supply-side publicist Jude Wanniski endlessly repeating that "overturning an existing order starts with one person and an idea. An idea persuades a second person, then a third, then a fourth . . ." and he is reminded of Lenin's trip from Zurich to Russia in the boxcar. "I knew that Wanniski wasn't talking historical rot. Chain reactions occur in politics; the Soviet precedent, of course, was not exactly inspiring." Not exactly?

Most bizarre of all is Stockman's description of Irving Kristol. Kristol is perhaps the preeminent conservative intellectual of our age. But Stockman describes him, at their first meeting, as "a secular incarnation of the Lord Himself."

We have here a familiar phenomenon. Serious social thinkers such as Kristol come along with fresh insights. There is more, or less, to a set of existing arrangements than has been realized. Then a younger generation elevates thought into belief. Not only are the ideas of their mentors true, they are the Only Truth. Given by the Lord Himself, or his secular incarnation. What began as skepticism concerning perceived notions transmutes into fierce conviction. We have seen all too much of this in the 20th century.

I don't mean to disparage David Stockman's idealism. Unlike so many who pass for conservatives in this period, he is not an apologist for privileged access to public benefit. Just the opposite. His rage is directed more at those who gorge at such public troughs as the Export-Import Bank than at those who live on food stamps. The irony is that the first sort are the ones Stockman helped bring to power.

The "failure" of the Reagan Revolution has brought about horrendous structural changes in the American economy, which will be with us for at least the rest of this century. We are now, for example, a debtor nation. Our export economy is in ruins because of the run-up of the dollar. Our corporations hollow out as they transfer production facilities abroad. The national debt is so large that for an indefinite period it will require a third to a half of all revenue from the personal income tax to pay the interest. If the personal income tax is taken as an elemental tax on labor, and debt service an elemental return to capital, we have here the largest transfer of wealth from workers to owners in the history of our political economy. As Herbert Stein has noted, once Republican legislators found you could have a three-digit deficit and the heavens didn't fall—that day—there was no restraining them. Thus the week after enacting Gramm-Rudman, the Senate passed a $52 billion farm bill.

What Stockman discovered is that after a first round of budget cuts, directed mostly at the poor, Congress came up against the fact that the electorate wanted pretty much the government it was getting. No New Order emerged. To the contrary, something like a latter-day version of Mark Twain's Great Barbecue commenced. The late Joseph Kraft captured the controlling principle of Washington in the 1980s in one word: greed.

STOCKMAN WATCHED his dream vanish, and slowly his faith began to weaken as well. He became less a radical, more a conservative, even if an embittered one. We have seen socialist ideals betrayed. Now, I suppose, we see capitalist ideals betrayed. The only thing worse than shortsighted, spendthrift, meddling congressmen, Stockman concludes, "is ideological hubris. It is the assumption that the world can be made better by being remade overnight."

We have in Washington today a political class incapable of recognizing a radical ideology when it is verily in the grips of one. Stockman is judged to have behaved *badly*, but not *differently*. He told untruths to Congress; he speaks unkindly of colleagues and disrespectfully of the president. That it was his *ideas* that mattered is a seemingly inaccessible thought. The 20th century has not been especially forgiving of such incapacity.

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat, is the senior senator from New York.

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How Jewish PACs may save the Republican Senate.

UNHOLY ALLIANCE

BY ROBERT KUTTNER

. . . Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph
—Exodus 1:8.

The 27th Annual Washington Conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, held April 6-8 at the Washington Hilton, was a luminous success. The VIP reception drew dozens of congressmen, senators, and candidates for office, eager to demonstrate their commitment to Israel. Invitations circulated on good stiff paper inviting the recipient, for example, "to join Senator Chris Dodd, a friend of Israel and a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, for champagne and strawberries in the Lincoln East Room." The national security briefing was conducted by CIA director William Casey himself. The discussion of terrorism was led by the attorney general, Edwin Meese III. On the dais in the cavernous grand ballroom, before an audience of over 1,000, Senators Edward Kennedy and John Heinz brought down the house by vowing to block an arms sale to Saudi Arabia that neither AIPAC nor the government of Israel actively opposes.

The Reagan administration had begun by sponsoring an ultimately futile quest for détente with the radical Arabs; the sale of an advanced flying surveillance system, the AWACS, to the Saudis; and a delay of delivery of advanced fighters to Jerusalem to punish Israel for retaliatory raids into Lebanon. The early 1980s had seen a campaign-finance environment awash in petrodollars, new Republican secretaries of state and defense fresh from the Arab-oriented Bechtel Corporation, and a Senate with several right-wing Republican freshmen entirely unknown to the Jewish community.

Yet by 1986 AIPAC's executive director, Thomas Dine, could report euphorically, "Despite the budget-cutting mood here in Washington, the [1985 foreign aid] legislation contained the most generous Israel aid package ever: three billion dollars in regular aid plus an additional $1.5 billion in emergency economic aid. All the funds are grants. The three billion dollars in aid represents an increase of $400 million over the previous fiscal year, and a doubling of grant assistance since 1983." He could report further that the House had approved the Israel free trade agreement 422 to zero; that the Senate had consented to the long-delayed Genocide Convention; and that joint U.S.-Israel military maneuvers have become routine.

As Israel has seemed more strategically and economically vulnerable, AIPAC and a new spate of pro-Israel political action committees have emerged as the dominant forms of Jewish political activity. (AIPAC, despite its name, is not a PAC. It is a registered lobby, but gives no funds to candidates.) Since 1981 some 70 pro-Israel PACs have been founded. By 1985, in a general political climate of pro-incumbent campaign-finance and single-issue politics, they were giving about 60 percent of their funds to Republicans and over 90 percent to incumbents. So successful has this strategy been that only a handful of far-right legislators cannot be counted today as friends of Israel.

Yet these achievements are not without their political complications. American Jews, while undoubtedly more politically centrist now than, say, two decades ago, still voted almost two-to-one for Walter Mondale in 1984. Yet the Israel connection is now delivering Jewish financial backing to candidates far to the right of positions that most Jews hold on most issues. Incumbent conservative Republicans have discovered a cynical formula. They have only to demonstrate sufficient loyalty to Israel, and they can all but lock out their Democratic challengers from a substantial fraction of Jewish support, even when the challenger is more sympathetic to such other deeply held Jewish concerns as separation of church and state. In fact, in this new environment even liberal candidates whose dedication to Israel is, if anything, more authentic—even liberal candidates who are Jewish—are at a disadvantage compared to conservative converts, because there is no need to reward loyalty that comes naturally. If the Republicans keep control of the Senate in 1986, a lopsided year when 18 Republicans are seeking reelection, the Israel nexus will be a significant factor.

Not only is substantial money flowing from Jewish PACs to far-right Republicans, but in several key states the most viable Democratic challengers have been dissuaded from making the race. The GOP has no such problems. Republican challengers can count on an ocean of business support. Democrats depend on labor and wealthy idealistic liberals, many of them Jewish.

Within the community of mainstream Jewish organizations, the continuing rise of AIPAC and the sudden rise of pro-Israel PACs has prompted an anguished debate about whether Jews are being perceived as a single-issue community. The Israel-first strategy has created odd alliances between Jewish organizations and New Right Christian evangelicals, whose philo-Semitism with regard to the Middle East has thus far failed to translate into sensitivity to Jewish domestic concerns such as school prayer. (And in practice, even Israel is such a low priority for the evangelicals that the Christian Voice congressional scorecard fails to include a single Mideast vote.) There is today a startling

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alliance between some Jewish organizations and right-wing evangelicals who are pro-Israel yet residually anti-Semitic. Meanwhile, the Christian right has targeted one pro-Israel liberal after another for defeat, because of their votes on abortion, civil liberties, social spending, and war and peace.

CONSIDER THREE KEY Senate races: New York, Wisconsin, and Florida. In New York the incumbent is the prodigious Alfonse D'Amato, a freshman Republican who has been a superb pork-barrel senator for New York despite a voting record that parallels Jesse Helms's on most social and fiscal questions. D'Amato, who received an estimated four percent of the Jewish vote in 1980, has also become a magnificent supporter of Israel. Beyond voting right, he has performed important behind-the-scenes services, such as blocking Arab arms sales hidden in secret appropriations. He went to the length of sponsoring a House-Senate resolution giving a Congressional Medal of Honor to *Achille Lauro* victim Leon Klinghoffer, which had to be awkwardly withdrawn after D'Amato learned that the medal was limited to military personnel.

D'Amato has formed very close alliances with key Jewish leaders in New York, as one potential Democratic contender after another has discovered. Last December the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee invited Arthur Levitt Jr. to Washington for a breakfast meeting. Levitt had been weighing a Senate race against D'Amato. Levitt, the son of a famous Democratic politician, the president of the American Stock Exchange, a political moderate, and a Jew (though not particularly active on Israel), was thought to be a fairly serious contender. But Levitt told the surprised senators that he had gotten a phone call from a prominent Jewish leader and campaign financier, advising him not to run against D'Amato. Levitt had then called two other key Jewish leaders, Howard Squadron and Kenneth Bialkin, both prominent New York lawyers and recent chiefs of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, who reiterated the advice. If Levitt ran, he would run without the substantial Jewish financial backing that usually goes to New York Democrats.

Other New York Democrats testing the waters, such as former representative Elizabeth Holtzman, who has a strong pro-Israel record, got similar advice. (Although to some Jews the commitment of anti-defense Democrats to a strong Israel is as suspicious as the pro-Israel enthusiasm of the New Right is to other Jews.) Malcolm Hoenlein, the very influential head of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, says, "I know a number of candidates who sounded out Jewish leaders, including traditional liberals. . . . The Jewish community was a very significant factor in their decision not to take D'Amato on."

Consumer activist Mark Green, the front-runner for the Democratic nomination almost by default, is widely discounted by insiders, partly because he is considered too liberal, partly because he starts with a few hundred thousand dollars while D'Amato begins with over five million dollars. Green, who is Jewish, says, "Jews prosper most in a society based on pluralism, and on tolerance of what Frankfurter called 'despised minorities.' Jews have a special set of values and a special tradition. D'Amato may back Israel, but he's at war with that tradition. When I say this to many Jewish leaders, they avert their eyes and shuffle their feet."

Conservative Republican Robert Kasten of Wisconsin shares top billing with D'Amato as a must-reelect for AIPAC and most of the pro-Israel PACs. Kasten not only votes in favor of Israel, but he chairs the important appropriations subcommittee on foreign aid. Kasten is given substantial credit for carrying the bill that shifted Israel aid from loans to outright grants, a bill that will do more for Israel than every nickel raised by the United Jewish Appeal. One possible Democratic contender, Herbert Kohl, a Milwaukee businessman, took soundings similar to Levitt's, and received a similar message: stay out. So did several others.

The current Democratic front-runner is Edward Garvey, formerly executive director of the National Football League Players Association. Last October, at a Democratic Party reception, Garvey was rebuffed when he tried to meet Morris Amitay, the former director of AIPAC and the current director of WashPAC, one of the largest pro-Israel PACs. Amitay's newsletter had described Wisconsin as a priority race, and Garvey as "not good on our issues." Asked what evidence he had for this assessment, Amitay explained to an incredulous Garvey aide that the Football Players Association had failed to oppose the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia!

Unlike the New York contest, the Wisconsin campaign is expected to be a horse race. Kasten was arrested last winter for drunk driving, and the polls show him with very high negatives. Eventually WashPAC's newsletter conceded that Garvey had put out "a good position paper on our issues." Although the Wisconsin Jewish community is split between Garvey and Kasten, virtually every penny of out-of-state Israel-PAC support has gone to Kasten, with the exception of two "multi-issue" Jewish PACs, about which more in a moment. Garvey adds: "Kasten has co-sponsored a bill to cut the interest rate on Israel's debt to the U.S. from 13 percent to seven percent. We have farmers going bankrupt in my state. Nobody is offering to cut their interest rate to seven percent. It looks to me like Kasten is playing with dynamite."

THE FLORIDA race, also a toss-up, suggests a quite different formula. There, Republican incumbent Paula Hawkins, another right-winger who supports Israel, will get the lion's share of out-of-state Israel-PAC money; but her Democratic challenger, Governor Bob Graham, a man with long-standing ties to Florida's Jewish community, will get substantial other Jewish support, both nationally and locally. "We will help Paula, but nine-tenths of our Florida members will give to Graham," concedes the director of a Jewish PAC. "They're both fine. It's a no-lose proposition." To an extent, this pattern holds in other states: Israel PACs support the pro-Israel

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incumbent; Jews, as individuals, support whom they please.

But as the Israel PACs become a more dominant influence on Jewish giving and as Republican Senate control continues, it remains to be seen whether the future portends more races like Florida's where Jews give to both sides, or more elections like the ones in Wisconsin and New York, where the Israel PACs throw much of the weight of the Jewish community behind the right-wing incumbent.

In fairness, the Israel PACs went all out to defeat Jesse Helms in 1984 and are now going all out for such longtime Democratic allies as Jim Jones of Oklahoma, Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, Chris Dodd of Connecticut, and Alan Cranston of California, as well as Republican moderates Bob Packwood and Bob Dole. However, in the latter two cases, the early support by the Israel PACs for the incumbents had substantial influence in persuading two potential Democratic challengers, both Jewish, to forgo the race. Sources close to Democratic congressmen Dan Glickman of Kansas and Ron Wyden of Oregon indicate that both men were told that little if any Jewish PAC money would be available to them, should they challenge Dole, or Packwood.

The tilt toward Republican incumbents became vivid this year, partly because the large New Right freshman class of 1980 is up for reelection. Many Jewish PAC leaders feel they have educated these legislators, and now have a substantial personal and political stake in their future. However, 1986 is no anomaly. The partisan tilt and the alliance with right-wingers is likely to intensify the longer Republicans control the Senate. At present, only four Republican incumbents are unacceptable to the pro-Israel community—Helms, Steven Symms, Jeremiah Denton (the three most right-wing members of the Senate), and James Abdnor (who is of Arab descent)—and all are trying to make amends. If Republicans keep control of the Senate, and the new crop of GOP freshmen follows the formula, fewer and fewer right-wing incumbents may ever face Democratic challengers who can expect the kind of help from Jewish PACs that such people used to get. That prospect certainly isn't good for the Democrats. But is it good even for the Jews?

THAT QUESTION HAS been the subject of an intense debate during recent months within leading Jewish organizations and in the Jewish press. After the 1984 election a number of prominent Jewish leaders, including Ted Mann of the American Jewish Congress, Hyman Bookbinder of the American Jewish Committee, and Rabbi David Saperstein of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, decided to challenge the single-issue PACs head-on. They organized MIPAC, which stands for Multi-Issue PAC. MIPAC argues that support for Israel should be a "threshold" issue—necessary to qualify for Jewish backing, but not sufficient. Before 1984 only one other Jewish PAC took this approach: the Joint Action Committee, or JAC, an organization of several thousand Jewish women. JAC refuses to support candidates from the New Right, even if they are friendly to Israel. The leaders of JAC took a great deal of criticism from the largely male leaders of AIPAC, who considered their strategy naive. One prominent AIPAC leader told a JAC sponsor: "It would be better if you just gave your contributions to your husbands."

According to Hyman Bookbinder, "Israel's cause is best served by a multi-issue approach, and not just because it looks nicer. We need allies. You don't get allies when you're seen as only caring about one issue." Campaign-finance politics seems to drive out coalition politics. A mainstream Democratic congressman from a farm state told me, "AIPAC is in town this week. They're going to want to exempt Israel aid from the Gramm-Rudman cuts. I'm going to say, 'Where were you when we needed you?' And they're going to say, 'We only care about one issue.' And I'm going to tell them, 'My other constituents happen to care about a lot of issues.' "

PROPONENTS OF THE AIPAC/Israel-PAC strategy make several points in rejoinder. First, they contend, Israel is the overarching issue for virtually all American Jews. "Jews agree on little else, but there is a total consensus on the survival of Israel," says Richard Altman of NatPAC. "If we didn't stand up and be counted on Israel, nobody else would do it." David Brody, the Washington representative of the Anti-Defamation League, adds: "The problem is not unique to the Jewish community. When the environmentalists target their 'dirty dozen,' all that matters is their record on environmental issues."

Second, PAC leaders say, if a legislator has been loyal on the Israel issue, it is bad politics to embrace his opponent based on secondary concerns. "It would suggest that we can't be trusted," says one lobbyist. If that logic tends to help Republicans in the present environment, that is also seen as a net plus, because Jews have probably been too loyal to Democrats anyway. In any case, the AIPAC/Israel-PAC network tends to view the single-issue/multi-issue formulation as something of a canard, the work of professional liberals. "It's this year's hot Jewish self-flagellation topic," says Malcolm Hoenlein. America is a pluralist society. As Jews, people contribute to pro-Israel PACs. As liberals or conservatives, they work for gun control or against government spending. Jewish PACs are not the only way Jews participate in American political life.

Finally, the PAC people reject the charges that pro-Israel activity creates the perception that Jews have only one thing on their mind, or that it creates an unseemly alliance between Jews and the hard right. The preponderance of Jewish political giving is still on the liberal side, according to Morris Amitay of WashPAC: "If anything, American Jews are still overrepresented, both in numbers and in financial support, in the civil rights, pro-choice, nuclear freeze, and similar movements, and have nothing to be ashamed of." The fact remains, though, that pro-Israel money has moved well to the right of most Jewish voters. Carole Boron, national director of MIPAC, says, "I believe we have to work with the party in power, even Jesse

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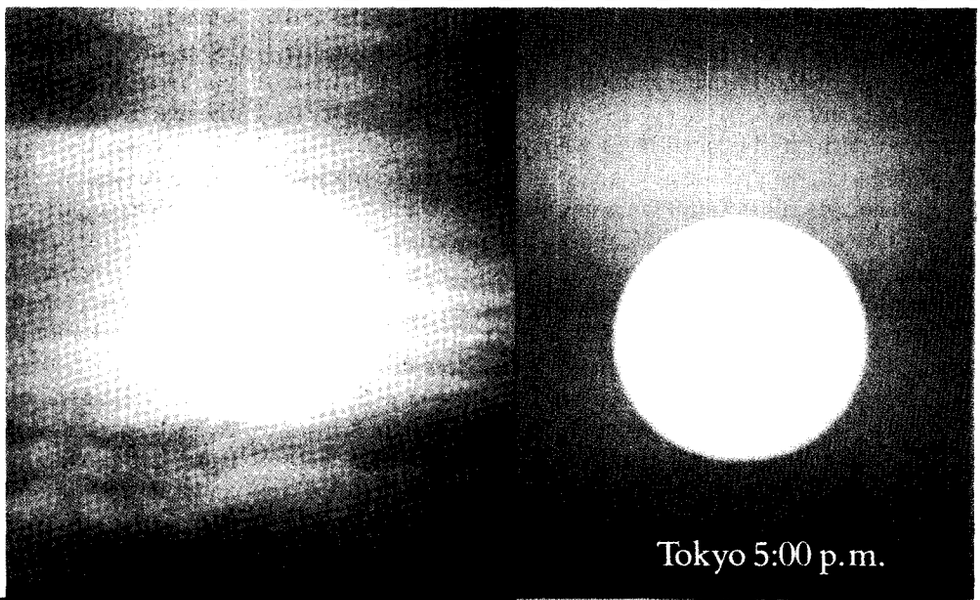
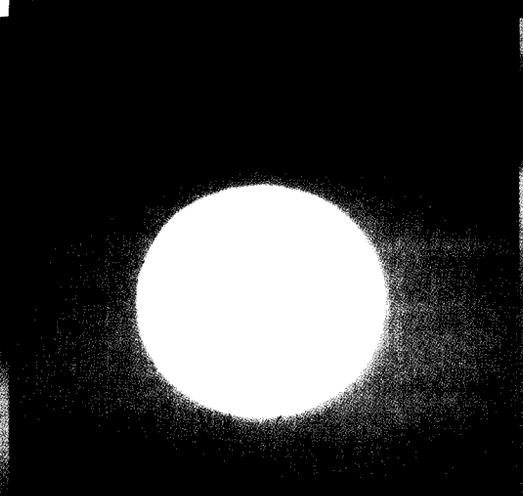
The sun never sets

London 8:00 a.m.



Tokyo 5:00 p.m.

Delhi 1:00 p.m.



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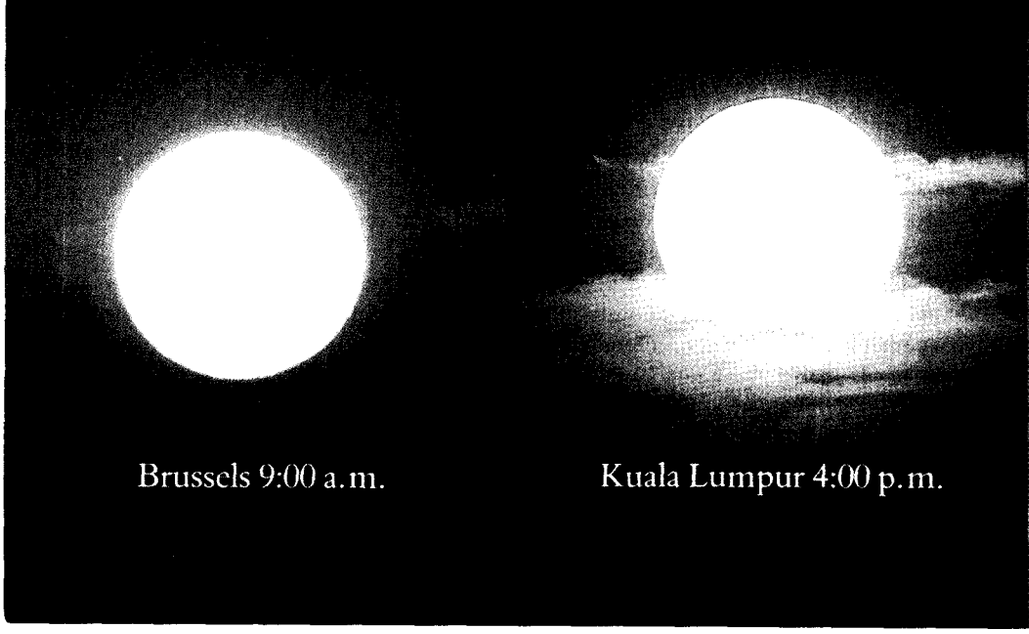

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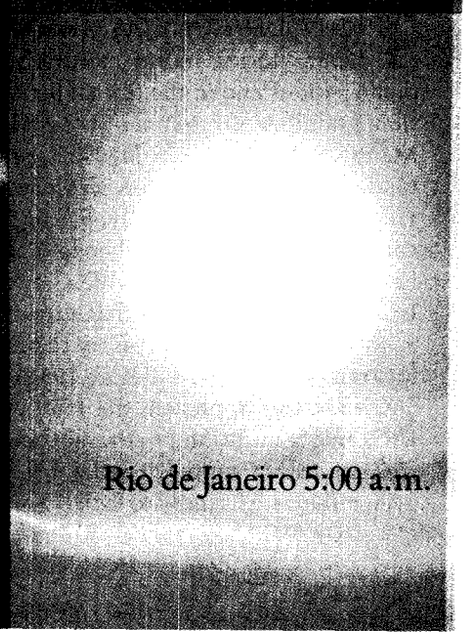

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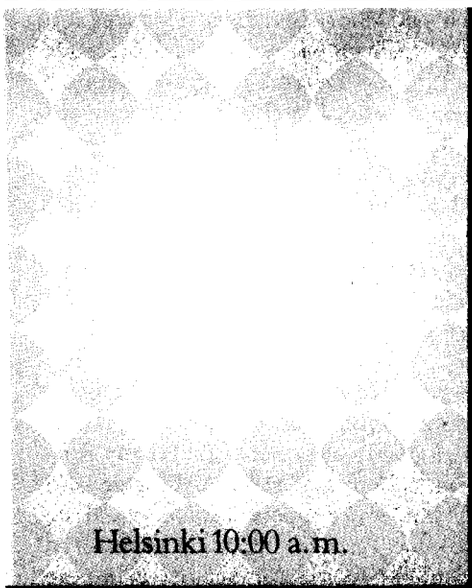

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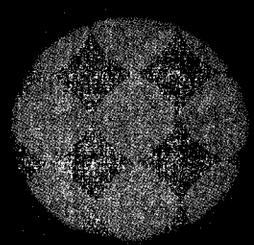

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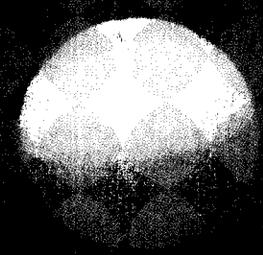

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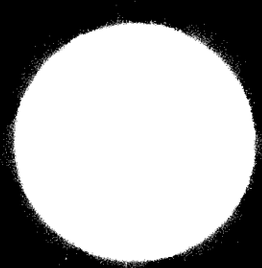

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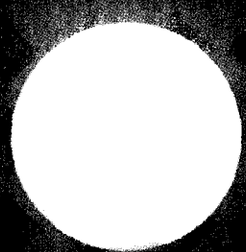

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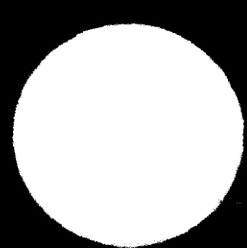

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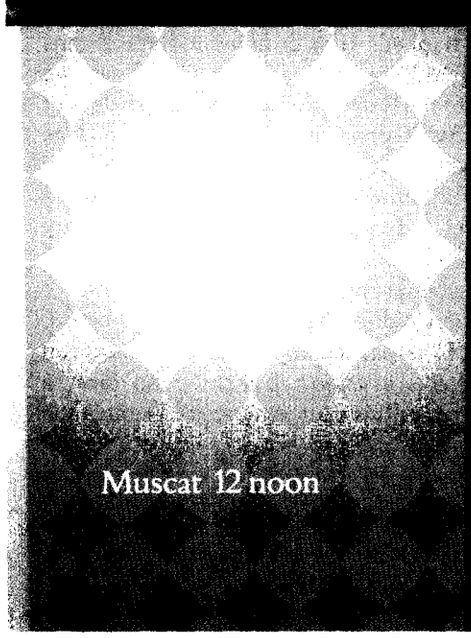

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Helms. But the other PACs cross over from working with people in power to using the Jewish community to keep them in power."

A RELATED CONCERN IS the growing alliance between some mainstream Jewish groups and the evangelical New Right, also based largely on a common support of Israel. When California Republican congressman Robert Dornan, one of the most reactionary members of Congress, uttered his infamous slip of the tongue on the House floor in March, describing Radio Moscow commentator Vladimir Posner as a "disloyal, betraying little Jew," the Anti-Defamation League, of all people, leapt to Dornan's defense. In a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, ADL regional director David A. Lehrer wrote: "I can assure you, were Congressman Dornan's remarks uttered with anti-Semitic animus, we at the ADL would have been among the first to condemn them." In a tortured exegesis of Dornan's syntax, Lehrer explained that what Dornan really meant was that Vladimir Posner was disloyal to the Jews.

Dornan, however, is a solid vote for Israel, and a kind of bridge between the Jewish community and the evangelical right. Many in the AIPAC/Israel-PAC community think it is shrewd politics to develop such alliances, even with far-right evangelicals whose main domestic mission is to "Christianize" America. Last year Representative Mark Siljander of Michigan signed a "Dear Pastor" letter, sent to church leaders in an adjoining congressional district. The letter urged them to "send another Christian to Congress." The incumbent happened to be Democrat Harold Wolpe, a Jew. But Siljander, another congressional far-right evangelist, continues to be one of the largest recipients of Israel-PAC money.

The Anti-Defamation League, in particular, seems to have decided that the Christian right, which supports the state of Israel as part of its theological view of Armageddon, can be domesticated and sensitized to other Jewish concerns. In the course of an hour-long interview, ADL's national director, Nathan Perlmutter, spent most of the conversation defending the likes of the Reverends Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Bailey Smith, whose remark "God does not hear the prayer of a Jew" engendered bitter feelings when it was uttered in 1982. Perlmutter pointed out that Smith, the head of the Southern Baptists, had subsequently apologized for the remark, and had made a trip to Israel accompanied by several Jewish leaders. (In Israel, Smith made one more gaffe. Learning of an Israeli police program to etch serial numbers on personal belongings as part of an antitheft program, Smith wondered aloud why they didn't just etch the numbers on people's arms.)

Another prominent television preacher and prayer-breakfast sponsor, the Reverend Jimmy Swaggart, writes in his new book, *The Coming Peace in the Middle East*, that there has been so little peace in the Middle East because "Israel as a people turned their back on the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and embraced pagan idols," and because Jews too often yielded to "philosophies that have proved harmful to mankind. . . . Consider, for example Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Leon Trotsky, and John Dewey [sic]."

Swaggart, in one broadcast, used footage of the death camps to demonstrate what befalls people who fail to embrace Jesus Christ. As the film ran, Swaggart, in a voice-over, intoned the names of Jewish victims. This was too much even for the ADL, which wrote a very tactful letter expressing delight with the Reverend Swaggart's support for the state of Israel, but advising him that the program had apparently offended some Jewish viewers. Swaggart wrote back that his intent had been misunderstood. The death camps, he said, did not represent God's punishment of the Jews, but rather the devil's work: "Whenever a person does not accept Jesus Christ, he takes himself away from God's protection. He then places himself under Satan's domain, who kills, steals, and destroys (St. John 10:10)."

From Perlmutter's perspective, the Christian right needs to be educated, not condemned. In an article in the December 1985 *Reconstructionist*, Perlmutter noted that many fundamentalist preachers had opposed the AWACS sale, and wondered how many liberal religious leaders could be counted on to do the same. Perlmutter told me: "I'm not so sure Jerry Falwell is out to Christianize America. Lumping all these people together as the radical right has become the contemporary counterpart of Red-baiting. Sixty percent of Americans favor school prayer. Are they all the radical right?" This perspective appalls many civil libertarians. Tony Podesta, president of People for the American Way, says, "Jerry Falwell is hostile at his core to religious liberty, to the separation of church and state, that are traditionally associated with the Jewish community."

Although advocates of this strategy insist they are making headway educating right-wingers on other Jewish sensitivities, the message is slow to take hold. According to Herbert L. Solomon, writing in the December 1985 Zionist periodical *Midstream*, of the 12 most conservative senators, all voted for the school prayer amendment, only two voted to deny arms to Jordan, and only two supported the resolution urging Reagan to cancel the Bitburg visit.

AS AIPAC and allied PACs have become more bipartisan, it often happens that prominent Republicans associated with AIPAC are just as eager to deliver the Jewish community to the Republicans as they are to deliver votes for Israel. AIPAC leaders who are Democrats, such as Tom Dine, a former aide to liberal senators Kennedy, Frank Church, and Edmund Muskie, bend over backward not to seem partisan. A decade ago, when most politically active Jews were Democrats and most pro-Israel Republicans were liberals, agenda-mixing was not a problem.

For example, Robert Asher, the chair of AIPAC's board, leans Republican. He is particularly close to Republican senator Mark Andrews of North Dakota, who faces a tightening reelection race this year. Andrews's Democratic opponent, Kent Conrad, also pro-Israel, is unlikely to get much Israel-PAC money. In a 1985 letter to major Jewish donors, Asher urged Jews to send $1,000 to Andrews-for-

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Senate. He added, "I look forward to greeting you personally at the AIPAC Policy Conference." Four years ago, as a favor to Andrews, Asher steered some money to the opponent of North Dakota Democratic congressman Byron Dorgan, whose record on Israel is excellent.

There are numerous other such cases of mixed agendas, where Republican Jewish leaders have donned their AIPAC hats in order to pitch for right-wing GOP incumbents. Not long ago Senator Rudy Boschwitz of Minnesota, a favorite of the Israel lobby, sent a letter to leaders of Jewish PACs urging them to support Senator Symms, whose record on Israel (and everything else) is terrible.

Last year Tom Dine asked for the resignation of AIPAC political director Chris Gersten. Sources say this was partly a personality conflict, but mainly the result of Gersten's being too crassly partisan on company time. Gersten, while at AIPAC, was using "AIPAC chits" with key legislators to promote his wife, Linda Chavez, for the job of secretary of education. Gersten now heads something called the National Jewish Coalition, which is effectively an arm of the Republican National Committee.

Gersten has helped set up meetings between New Right leaders and prominent Jews. He admits Republicans still have a hard sell where a few hard-right senators are concerned. "We're still playing catch-up with Symms, Helms, and Denton. Our role is to introduce them to the Jewish community, to key people in New York and California, to take them to Israel, and maybe raise some money for them."

Statistically, if one looks at the overall balance of Jewish giving, PAC and individual, Democrats still out-raise Republicans. But that picture is misleading. Of the 18 Republican senators facing reelection in 1986, Jewish PACs will actively oppose only three. In four or five of the seven open seats, Jewish PACs will still support the Democrat. On balance, single-issue politics has substantially neutralized the once-liberal influence of the Jewish community.

TO PLACE ALL these dilemmas in perspective, a little history is in order. Jews, of course, have been primarily Democrats and liberals ever since the New Deal. They have also contributed a disproportionate share of Democratic Party finances, probably a fourth to a third of the total. Jews, because of their unique heritage, have been the one group in America to vote consistently against their ostensible pocketbook interests. Jews, according to a famous quip, are the only people who live like Episcopalians and vote like Puerto Ricans.

But this picture has been steadily eroding since the early 1970s. Hubert Humphrey was the last Democratic presidential candidate who could count on over 80 percent of the Jewish vote. The new Jewish bipartisanship and the shift toward the political center have multiple roots: national security concerns (most notably Israel); prosperity; the affirmative action controversy; a perception that Democratic Party standard-bearers George McGovern and Jimmy Carter had tilted toward the Arabs; and most recently, the role in the party of Jesse Jackson. *Commentary* magazine and the network of conservative Jewish intellectuals like Irving Kristol have endeavored to package all of the above into a generalized Jewish neoconservatism. Operations like Gersten's National Jewish Coalition provide the partisan shock troops.

Finally, there has been a change in the nature of the Israel issue itself. For most of its history, Zionism was a liberal cause. Until the election of Menachem Begin's Likud government in 1977, Israel had a democratic socialist government. As Israel came to be perceived as a cold war ally, and as the worldwide left took up the Palestinian cause, the political coloration of support for Israel began to change. The combination of Likud in Israel, Reagan in the United States, and the ascendancy of PACs and single-issue politics in Congress all served to move Jewish interest-group activities to the right of the Jewish electorate. Were it not for the Israel nexus, most American Jews would have nothing to do with a Kasten or a Hawkins—much less a Falwell.

THE THEME OF Jewish history, of course, is the theme of survival. For several thousand years Jews have been justifiably anxious about new pharaohs who knew not Joseph, new czars, new popes, new *Reichskanzlers*, and new presidents of the United States. Jews have depended on back channels to the palace ever since Queen Esther. Accommodation with the party in power is a necessary habit, not a shameful one. Liberal Democratic congressman Sam Gejdenson of Connecticut, the son of Holocaust survivors, a major recipient of Israel-PAC money, and a critic of single-issue politics, says: "The single-issue phase was probably a necessary phase. The danger is that it goes too far—the legislator says, 'Beat it, kid, we already took care of you.' Coalition building with intolerant groups does not make sense for the long run. You can't do business with people who are fundamentally intolerant of you. There needed to be a course correction, and the good news is that it is happening already."

For Democrats, the new ability of right-wing pro-Israel Republicans to deny their liberal challengers Jewish support presents a real problem. It comes at a time when other liberal Democratic constituencies have eroded. Organized labor is depleted; the public sector is on the defensive; the young are skeptical; the poor fail to vote. AIPAC's selective alliance with the far right has been the subject of anguished conversations between prominent Democratic legislators, and leaders of the Israel lobby. Still, there is a salutary effect for the Democrats as well. In the past, the ability to raise money from the same pool of well-known donors, many of them Jewish business leaders, too long allowed Democrats the luxury of ignoring different strategies of electioneering. "Democrats," says one critic, "know just how to write direct-mail pieces aimed at a few zip codes in New York, Miami, Cambridge, and Beverly Hills. They haven't learned how to write direct mail for Des Moines." If Democrats broaden their fund-raising, and Jewish political activists can learn to hold conservative Republicans accountable on more than one issue, Democrats and Jews both stand to gain. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Unanswered Questions

What do Ireland, Norway, Finland, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Portugal, and Switzerland have in common? All of them are European countries with notable theatrical cultures, and none of them has contributed much of note to the world treasury of film. Switzerland has been stirring in the last decade or so, but none of the countries, though they all make films, has made the sort of cinematic mark that might have been expected because of its dramatic—and literary—riches. Why is this the case? Is it because Norway is small? Then why have Denmark and Sweden done much more? Is it because Ireland has been politically shaken? Then why has Greece given us much more? Is it because for decades there was strict censorship in Portugal? Then why did Spain under Franco send us good films?

Tracks in the Snow
(Spring Films)

Femmes de Personne
(European Classics)

I don't include Soviet bloc countries in the list because (a) the young Soviet Union caused one of the great revolutions in film, and that country keeps trying to maintain a vigorous presence in the film world; and (b) since World War II, several of the countries under Soviet domination—notably Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary—have made some of the best films of the last 40 years. I don't include Latin American countries because, although I rate most of what I have seen somewhat lower, many serious critics think highly of work in every Latin American country from which film could conceivably have been expected. (This excludes Paraguay, of course.) I don't include Asian countries because, excepting India and Japan, I know abysmally little about their films and their culture in general. (India has made major contributions. Japan has one of the world's great film cultures.)

Why does this European condition exist? Why should, for two examples, Ireland and Austria, countries with famous playwrights and actors and theater institutions, have made no films of significance to the world at large? I don't know. No explanation fits either of those countries, and certainly none—that I can think of or have read—fits all the countries listed at the start.

The question has plagued me for years, and it wormed its way up again while I was watching a new Dutch film. *Tracks in the Snow* is the second feature by 34-year-old director Orlow Seunke. Every aspect of its execution is fine: the cinematography, the costumes, the acting, the editing. The trouble is with the script, which was written by Seunke "with Dirk Ayelt Kooiman in cooperation with Maarten Koopman and Gerard Thoolen." It's not a question of flaws that keep the script from fulfillment. It's not even a question of wondering where these writers have been for years, of whether they have ever seen a film. The real question is: Having obviously seen so many films, ones that apparently impressed them, why have they merely made a ragout of bits from many of those films? And since this often happens in the countries I named earlier, the question enlarges: Why are these countries strapped into an artistic time lag in the film field? How can film people of such evident sophistication either be unaware of or disregard their blatant imitations?

Tracks in the Snow is about two quite dissimilar Amsterdam brothers of middle age. One is a successful, brusque stockbroker, living with a wife and family in a big house; the other is a homosexual actor and cabaret performer, who apparently manages to get along. Their father long ago emigrated "to the Far North." They get word that he is dying, and they set out to see him. The main action of the story is about their adventures in the snowy wastes searching for their father, their sibling rivalries, the death of their father soon after they arrive, and their transportation of his body, on a horse-drawn sled, to the place where he wanted to be buried. We are warned from the start that the action is symbolic: the film begins (and ultimately ends) as a play on the actor-brother's stage. But the style is mostly so realistic—although the northern country isn't named, the picture was shot in Norway—that I couldn't suppress some literal-minded queries. Why did the rigorously logical stockbroker wear city clothes, including shoes, into this snowy territory? Why did the soldiers in this freezing place wear no hats and have shaven skulls? Why did the brothers entrust their lives and their father's coffin to a drunken stupid driver? And more. The viewer can find any set of symbols that he chooses in the film, mythic or Freudian or religious or Marxist. He can even fall back on the old reliable: the two brothers are really different aspects of one man. But whatever symbolic pattern the viewer chooses, the film ends up as a set of clues that provides, not merely no solution, but no real mystery.

And there are many, many reminders of films past: Bergman (particu-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

My Beautiful Laundrette. Insinuatingly humane, funny, discursive, basically grim comedy-drama, well acted and directed. Pakistanis in London today. (Reviewed 4/7/86)

A Room with a View. E. M. Forster is well served, except for the leading actress. The grace and winsomeness of the Edwardian English in Italy and England adroitly rendered. (3/24/86)

Shoah. Making its way to more cities, towns, universities. Claude Lanzmann's nine-and-a-half-hour documentary about the Final Solution (shown in two parts) is one of the cinematic experiences of a lifetime. (10/28/85)

Turtle Diary. Harold Pinter's script, richly minimalist, is played perfectly by Glenda Jackson, Ben Kingsley, and Michael Gambon. Two Londoners convey sea turtles from an aquarium to freedom—an adventure wittily enlightening. (3/10/86)

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larly the earlier, weightily symbolic Bergman); Antonioni's stock-market sequences in *Eclipse*; Troell's snowy vastness in *Here's Your Life* (in which a sled seems suspended in white space). Worse, there are reminders of recent Dutch heaviness—Verhoeven's *The Fourth Man*, for instance.

I know, from film journals and annuals, that I see only a small fraction of any country's films. But can it be merely my bad luck that I've seen so few noteworthy films from the countries listed above and that the ones from Holland are almost always imitatively arty?

ON THE other hand, here's a fizzle from France. "On the other hand" is probably inappropriate: the best of filmmaking countries, among which is France, inevitably produces a preponderance of poor films. Still—this is less prejudice than conditioning—I am not surprised by a poor Dutch film and I tend to be surprised by a poor French one, especially when it is as exceptionally well cast as *Femmes de Personne*.

It was written and directed by Christopher Frank, an Englishman who works in both England and France. The making of it is smooth, the acting gives it exactly the air of knowledgeable fluency that it wants; and these factors only make its basic stupidity more irritating.

The leading characters are women, all connected with a radiology clinic in Paris: two doctors, an assistant, a receptionist. The story deals with their private lives, some of which interweave and all of which are incessantly, almost indiscriminately, sexual. One of the doctors, Marthe Keller, though she apparently cruises a bar for a new man every night, goes well out of her way to meet a married building contractor played by Jean-Louis Trintignant. After two nights together, they part with what is meant to be rue. The other doctor, Caroline Cellier, seeks to revive her interest in her marriage by arranging with the clinic's receptionist to sleep with her husband. The doctors' assistant, Fanny Cottencon, like Keller, seems to have a different sleep-in date every night. (We learn that this is because her heart is broken.)

Of course Keller, a divorcée, has a small son so that we get a chance to see that she is really "good." Of course Cottencon attempts suicide so that the two doctors have a chance to show their professionalism. And we get a lot of other warmths and wistfulnesses, as well as ultracool mod attitudes.

THOMAS MANN

PRO AND CONTRA WAGNER

Translated by **Allan Blunden**
Introduction by **Erich Heller**

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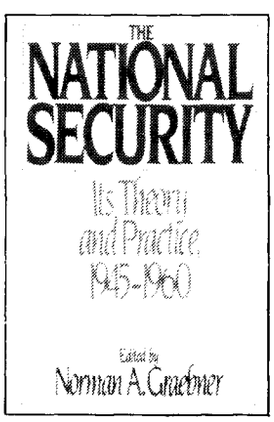

*Contributions by Richard D. Challener, Lloyd C. Gardner, Martin J. Sherwin, David Alan Rosenberg, Douglas Kinnard, I.M. Destler, and Gary W. Reichard

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The title translates as *Nobody's Women*, and Frank intends, he says, that we see liberated professional women living as they choose. But if this is what liberation means to him, I think that at least some liberated women are going to dissent. The double standard is, I hope, dead; but I doubt that freedom means promiscuity to all women any more than it did and does to all men.

That's why the film is fundamentally stupid. More than that, it's offensive: nothing in *Femmes de Personne* convinces me that Frank means it seriously. It's just an oo-la-la French film updated, with copulation instead of the cancan. The offense is aggravated because of the two leading women, the beautiful and gifted Cellier, and the lovely Keller, whose exceptional talent is once again wasted.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Texts and Subtexts

Three-quarters of a century ago, the visionary Russian director Vsevelod Meyerhold announced that "words in the theater are only a design on the canvas of motion." This provocative position sparked duels that are still being fought on the contemporary stage. Is the theater essentially a literary form, celebrating the sanctity of the playwright and the supremacy of language? Or is the written text just another color on the palette of the auteur director?

Vienna: Lusthaus
by Martha Clarke

Principia Scriptoriae
by Richard Nelson

The answer obviously is both—a healthy art form can tolerate many competing claims. Still, it is only recently that the American play-writing tradition has been seriously challenged by Meyerhold's idea of theater as a director-inspired collective artwork. In the face of objections from many drama critics, theatrical texts are often subordinated to concept, design, lighting, movement, sound, and music. At the same time, a number of imaginative American artists are entering the theater from other disciplines: Robert Wilson from architecture and painting, Ping Chong from film and design, Joanne Akalaitis from the social sciences—and now Martha Clarke from dance.

Miss Clarke demonstrated her unearthly theater instinct two years ago with *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, a work of almost bestial beauty created in collaboration with the composer, Richard Peaslee, and based on the famous triptych by Hieronymus Bosch. Following human "progress" from Edenic grace before the Fall to a condition of Hobbesian brutality, the piece was a compound of movement, acting, music, and aerial gymnastics, a wordless (though not soundless) collage that led some to question whether it was properly called theater—or dance. Yet it undeniably belonged to the stage, just as clearly as Wilson's operas and Richard Foreman's phantasmagorias do. *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, in fact, is arguably one of the most significant works of postwar American theatrical art.

Miss Clarke has now followed this with a piece composed of similar elements (excluding flying), also produced by the Music-Theatre Group/Lenox Arts Center. It is called *Vienna: Lusthaus*, and while not yet as fully imagined as its predecessor (being still a work in progress), it confirms her stature as a major American theater artist.

Vienna is a dream play inspired by a piece of architecture—the *Lusthaus*, or Pleasure Pavilion, originally built in the Austrian capital before 1556—"an octagonal structure," as the program tells us, "located at the far end of the Prater." Clearly, Miss Clarke's imagination is aroused by visual stimuli (the work was also influenced, she says, by the nude drawings and paintings of Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt). And if my admiration for *Vienna* is not total, it is partly because this brilliantly imagistic work has not yet fully assimilated Charles Mee Jr.'s gnomic and flattened text. Intoned like sleepwalkers by the actors Robert Langdon-Lloyd and Brenda Currin, Mee's tangential narrative speaks of fountains, rivers, trips to the opera, rat killings, and human habitations. ("Man is born in a hospital and dies in a hospital; he ought to live in a place that looks like a hospital.") But it intersects with Miss Clarke's imagery only on one crucial point—the erotic. Love—whether heterosexual, homosexual, narcissistic, incestuous, or bestial—is the articulated and unarticulated theme of the evening; it also forms a junction with the other subject of *Vienna*, death.

Miss Clarke appreciates the dangerous beauty of naked human bodies, especially with their limbs entwined in what Blake called "the lineaments of gratified desire." For her, fin de siècle Vienna represents sexuality (and perhaps Jew-baiting) on the rampage: after lulling us with the elegant civility of military officers, demure ladies, and Strauss waltzes, she evokes dream images of increasing coarseness and violence. A soldier sits with a lifelike puppet on his lap, caressing and undressing her. A man and a woman locked in embrace roll on the floor in slow ecstasy. Another man wearing women's shoes on his hands manages to make love to himself. As musicians wander blithely through the action, a soldier lying on the ground peeks under the skirt of a noncommittal girl. Another slaps a rival in the face. That soldier is later killed, perhaps by he who got slapped, and is visited by mourners. At the conclusion snow falls on the living and the dead, and the performers first skate, then waltz, through the drifts. The evening ends with a decomposing query: "What colors does a body pass through after death?"

These episodes have been arranged in a nonlinear, nonsequential manner that sacrifices cumulative narrative power to unity of mood. This is not a dream with a story, however fractured or fragmented, like Strindberg's *A Dream Play* or Cocteau's *Blood of a Poet*, but rather variations on a reverie, designed to make a subliminal appeal. It is, as a result, abstract and allusive—and somewhat unanchored. Because the shards of text are so divorced from the movement, the mind sometimes divorces itself as well, and the spectator finds himself not so much engaged in the proceedings as detached, an admiring witness.

Still, the imagery is extraordinarily lovely even at its grossest, and the control of the performers is breathtaking: the lissome slender nymph Paola Styron, the expressionless puppet Lila York, the virile blond lover Robert Besserer, the deliciously corrupt Marie Fourcaut, the dead soldier Timothy Doyle, nay all the

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dancers and all the actors, represent models of discipline. Richard Peaslee's music, more diffident here than usual, has a haunting grace, even in dissonance, and the visual environment is stunning. Robert Israel, responsible also for the striking Viennese military tunics, shifts, and ballroom gowns, has designed a tilted white room, glimpsed always behind a scrim functioning as a transparent shroud. It helps dislocate our sense of reality, as Paul Gallo's eerie, luminous, shadowy lighting helps disorient our psyches. Whatever my reserve about *Vienna* in its present phase of development, it is a performance piece of consequence that poises Martha Clarke for greater leaps in future.

WITH Richard Nelson's *Principia Scriptoriae* at the Manhattan Theatre Club, we are back in the play-writing tradition—a self-consciously scripted drama about convulsions in Central America, and also, as the title suggests, about the moral act of writing. When I read this play in manuscript, I liked it a lot better, not because the production is weak—Lynne Meadow's staging is reasonably adequate to the occasion—but rather because production adds almost nothing new to the text. This is a writing, not a performance, problem. If the mysteries of a play are fully plumbed in the study—if the theater can't dredge up any unexpressed values—then the work probably doesn't demand the stage. These mysteries are what Stanislavsky, at work on the plays of Chekhov, called the "subtext," the hidden designs and behavior patterns that actors can embroider into characters and actions. *Principia Scriptoriae* is an intelligent work, but its author has left little for the performers, or the audience, to discover by themselves. For that reason, it leaves one feeling obscurely unsatisfied, vaguely ahead of the events.

Nelson's first act, which takes place in a detention room, revolves around two characters—a young American would-be writer named Bill, and Ernesto, an English-educated Latin American revolutionary. They have both been arrested after taking part in an antigovernment demonstration. Soon they will both be seriously tortured. The act is broken into scenes, each identified by a projection enunciating a writing principle ("Choose Your Setting Carefully," "Always Like Your Characters," "Know Your Reader," etc.), intended to ironically contrast literary rules with a brutal reality. Bill is characterized, possibly too crudely, as a sixties yippie in Hush Puppies who talks of revolution in New Left platitudes and sees demonstrations as an occasion for selling T-shirts. If he is indicted, he intends to turn the trial into a Happening, perhaps getting gagged like "that black guy in Chicago." He envies Ernesto his "background," because he has access to "interesting stories." By the end of the act, he will have a lot to write about, including the electrical shocks administered to his genitals.

The second act takes place in the same country 15 years later during a Writers' Committee conference on human rights. Having taken power, the left has imprisoned a right-wing poet, and Ernesto has become a government functionary, denying that prisons exist in his country. Bill, now a published writer accompanying the conferees, finds himself Ernesto's antagonist rather than his friend. Their reunion is perfunctory. For old times' sake, Ernesto lets him stay in his house instead of a hotel room. Both agree, "We were stupid then." In a final flashback, we see them tied together back to back, as a soldier pretends to execute them.

The two disparate acts are linked together only by the two central characters and by literary references. Nelson gets some mileage out of dramatizing how youthful idealism gets drained into expediency, careerism, and ideological conformity, but otherwise one can't find

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much unity in his play. Also, it seems thin and declarative in comparison with a not very good movie, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, with related characters and situations. The actors have spirit—Anthony Heald (a young Nick Nolte) as Bill, Joe Urla as the tormented Ernesto, and particularly Mike Nussbaum as a pompous German writer—but they and their director have difficulty inventing activities, circumstances, and character details that would make these people interesting. As a result, intelligent though it is, the play drags. With *Principia Scriptoriae*, Richard Nelson proves he knows the principles of writing. What the play lacks is sufficient trust in the principles of production—a confidence that the stage can help you tell your story, a knowledge that the chords resonating beneath the surface of your text are what justify the apparatus of the theater.

THE IMAGINARY REVOLUTION

The Triumph of Politics: Why the Reagan Revolution Failed by David A. Stockman

(Harper & Row, 422 pp., $21.95)

The debate over David Stockman's book is more interesting than the book itself. As a political drama, its more than 400 pages quickly deteriorate into tedium. Stockman simply isn't a good storyteller. His put-downs of Ronald Reagan and other political personalities are titillating, but barely break the general monotony. Nor does the book succeed as an explanation of politics. In his title, *The Triumph of Politics*, Stockman enshrines his belief that current government spending reflects popular demands and therefore requires higher taxes. But the central political problem of huge budget deficits is that popular demands—for more spending, lower taxes, and no deficits—are inconsistent. Stockman never faces up to these inconsistencies. Nor does he clearly say what the federal government in the late 20th century ought to do. Finally, his understanding of how government affects the economy is incomplete and, at times, wrong. As entertainment, *The Triumph of Politics* is a dud. As a social document, it is shortsighted and self-serving.

Still, its illusions make it relevant. Strangely, Stockman and his critics embrace a common mythology—the "Reagan Revolution." The phrase is a figment of the political imagination: it satisfies a craving for melodrama while distorting reality. According to Stockman, he and other conservative ideologues foisted a radical view of government on Ronald Reagan. The president's failure to adopt the full "revolution" led to huge deficits. Most of Stockman's critics accept this history, and therefore blame him for creating the deficits. In fact, nobody in the Reagan administration—including Stockman—ever proposed abandoning the basic tasks of government that had evolved since the Depression. Scan Stockman's book, and you won't find a clear idea anywhere of what the "revolution" was. It never existed.

The murkier truth is that, by the start of the 1980s, government had reached an impasse. The tax burden, at a post-World War II high, was resented. Rising domestic spending had created vast constituencies. Defense spending was considered too low. Inflation, which helped balance the budget, was considered too high, and deficits were already too big. Government could not cure all these discontents simultaneously. Choices had to be made, and any would have unpalatable political side effects. Politics in the 1980s was fated to be turbulent as government coped with actual, not fancied, realities.

If the flash point hadn't been deficits, it would have been something else. Imagine that Jimmy Carter had been reelected. Surely he would have come under pressure (he already was) to cut taxes, raise defense spending, and curb inflation—all of which would have compelled him to run higher deficits or cut domestic spending. No one can say what he would have decided, how Congress would have reacted, or whether the conflicts would have been resolved. But they were inevitable. In America politics is personalized to make it interesting and comprehensible. Would a second Carter administration have been labeled the "Carter Conversion"? Well, we got the "Reagan Revolution," and along with it the fiction that today's spending and tax debates are mostly a quirk of Reagan's stubbornness. To be sure, Reagan's unwillingness to help reconcile the conflicting pressures has deepened and prolonged the deficits. But the debates were preordained. In the 1980s a government that overcommitted itself for 20 years has had to face the consequences. It is daydreaming to think that a new political consensus would instantly emerge.

You will not learn this from Stockman. Nor will you learn that the American economy and political system are far healthier today than in 1980. Having spent four years working on budget deficits, Stockman has made them the center of his political and economic universe. But the overriding economic and political event of the Reagan years has been the collapse of inflation. It was inflation's relentless rise that subverted Americans' traditional optimism and abetted a loss of faith in political leadership. And inflation's suppression—engineered by the Federal Reserve but supported by Reagan—not only led to economic recovery but also restored confidence in government. It is not that Stockman was wrong in opposing the deficits. But their worst consequences (including the possibility that government might revive inflation to ease its debt burden) are likely to emerge over a long period. Meanwhile, deficits represent the easiest *political* solution to the budget impasse. For politicians, the pains of raising taxes or cutting spending are immediate and identifiable, while deficits' evils are obscure and theoretical.

NO ONE should be surprised that Stockman has produced an egotistical version of history. He reveals himself as a man of huge ambitions and unstable intellectual passions. On the Michigan farm where he grew up, everyone picked raspberries, peaches, tomatoes, and strawberries. "By the time I was ten—in 1956—I could outpick all the adults," Stockman writes. He wanted to be a farmer "because I imagined I could be a better one than my father."

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Later he went to Michigan State and graduate school at Harvard, becoming infatuated with politics. Harvard

> was crowded with people who had just gotten off the Washington-Boston shuttle . . . breathing the same air as these famous people was exhilarating beyond belief. . . . I was thoroughly infected with a desire to find a place at the other end of the shuttle.

Through *Washington Post* political writer David Broder (who was teaching a seminar at Harvard) Stockman was introduced to Republican congressman John Anderson, who hired him as a legislative assistant.

All the while, Stockman's political views were constantly changing. Growing up he was heavily influenced by his grandfather, William Bartz, a local politician who was county treasurer. Bartz's credo could be succinctly summarized: "God voted Republican. Capitalism was the way of free men. The New Deal was a socialist way to perdition." At Michigan State, Stockman drifted in and out of radical antiwar politics, and by the time he arrived at Harvard, he was a conventional liberal. Later, in Washington—first working for Anderson and then as a congressman himself—he became a conventional conservative and, finally, a disciple of "supply-side economics" and an ally of its principal congressional advocate, Representative Jack Kemp. It was with Kemp's help that Stockman actively campaigned to be Ronald Reagan's budget director. "We had lunch with columnist Bob Novak," Stockman recalls.

> Novak wrote a column saying there was a movement growing to put Stockman in at the Office of Management and Budget. At the time he wrote it, it was a movement of three or four, if you included the minority of my [congressional] staff that favored the idea. But after the column appeared, it did become a movement of sorts.

Later, of course, Stockman also became disenchanted with supply-side economics, and Novak became disenchanted with Stockman.

It's hard to trust the judgment of anyone who, whatever his raw intelligence, has had so many radical conversions. Stockman's constant illusion is that he can discover some ultimate Truth that will make sense of the world. His latest obsession is the wisdom of ordinary politicians, despite his loathing for many of them. "Politicians can be a menace," he writes. "They never stop inventing illicit enterprises of government that bleed the national economy." But what's worse, he says, is intellectual arrogance: "the assumption that the world can be made better by being remade overnight. . . . It can't be done. It shouldn't have been tried." Stockman indicts and convicts himself of this crime, saying he shouldn't have promoted a "revolution." His critics agree that his zealousness fostered the huge budget deficits. They're all wrong; the glib analysis mistakes Stockman's revolutionary fantasies for the deeper political causes of the deficit.

In fact, Stockman served honorably as budget director, and much of the criticism of his role is undeserved. By the summer of 1981 he was warning the White House of massive future deficits—and he kept at it for four years, even though no one wanted to listen. In public he tried to elevate the debate about government spending, asking whether programs served important national needs. It's true that the Reagan administration's initial budget and economic forecasts were optimistic and inaccurate—but so were the Carter administration's. It's true, too, that Stockman

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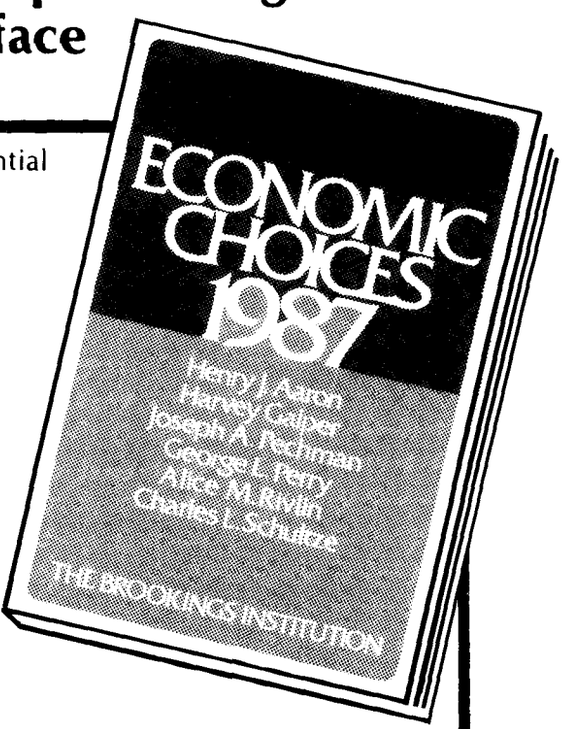

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defended policies in public that he did not fully endorse. David Broder says he was guilty of "duplicity" and should have resigned when the president evaded deficit reduction. Well, maybe. But if everyone who disagreed with a policy quit government, there'd be hardly anyone left.

Much of the criticism of Stockman actually reflects personal peeve. To much of the political community, Stockman has behaved badly and, what's more enraging, made a bundle in the process. (His book advance exceeded two million dollars.) Most offensive of all is his violent mockery and brazen disloyalty. Stockman "has advanced to the heights without grasping anything but manipulative skills," Broder writes. "He is loyal to no one, cheerfully insulting the talents and judgments of the president who elevated him . . . and demeaning almost all the others he was pleased to call his colleagues." Stockman's greatest sin is that he no longer cares about the good opinion of the Washington political establishment. Just as he is rejecting it, it is rejecting him. Entertaining and understandable, this squabbling is also distracting. It obscures what really happened in the 1980s.

NATIONAL government is—or ought to be—about national needs. But since World War II, government has shouldered new "needs" in an increasingly casual manner, reflecting a more optimistic view of government. It would perfect capitalism by curing business cycles, protecting the weak against the "free market," and paying for desirable things that, for whatever reason, the private economy didn't amply supply. Because government promoted faster economic growth—greater national wealth—it could afford added responsibilities without unduly raising the tax burden (the share of people's income paid as taxes). What inevitably transformed politics in the 1980s was not Ronald Reagan, but the collapse of this hopeful vision of government. The increases in domestic spending had been paid for by higher deficits, lower defense spending, and an upward creep in the tax burden. The strenuous effort to increase economic growth had produced higher inflation.

Calling Ronald Reagan's response a "revolution" is simply wrong. If Reagan had sought "revolution," he might have declared that government, for all its good intentions, could not guarantee prosperity. Therefore, it should not try. Instead, he argued that his vague economic program (variously labeled "Reaganomics" or "supply-side economics") would restore good times. Far from disavowing government responsibility, Reagan embraced it. To shrink government significantly, Reagan might have proposed eliminating the pillars of the welfare state, Social Security and Medicare. Reagan never went so far, and although Stockman may have harbored such notions, neither did he. The basic idea that government should protect the poor and elderly remained. Reagan changed the details of major programs and proposed eliminating some minor programs. But even with his tax cut, the tax burden is still at the average of the 1970s. And despite the defense buildup, military spending (as a proportion of GNP) is lower than it was in every year between 1951 and 1972.

IT'S POSSIBLE to conceive how, in the early emotional flush of a new administration, Stockman might imagine himself making a "revolution." But it's difficult to grasp how someone of his intelligence could maintain the delusion five years later. Even if the administration had achieved everything it proposed, there would have been no revolution. Government would still have remained much as it has been for the last 30 years and totally unlike what it was before the Great Depression. Reagan and Stockman were dealing with the more humdrum problem of a government that had committed itself to spend more than people wanted to be taxed. As it turned out, of course, almost no one in the administration—or anywhere else, for that matter—fully appreciated the extent of the government's overcommitments. This realization made the budget problem more difficult, but did not turn it into a revolution.

The greatest virtue of Stockman's narrative is that it provides fresh details on how the budget impasse developed. One revealing incident involves the defense buildup. During the 1980 campaign Reagan made inconsistent statements, pledging annual "real" (inflation-adjusted) military spending increases of between five and nine percent. On January 30, 1981, Stockman and his defense specialist, Bill Schneider, met with Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and his deputy, Frank Carlucci, at the Pentagon. They quickly split the difference between Reagan's promises, agreeing upon seven percent "real" annual growth. Stockman accepted Carlucci's suggestion that they calculate the increases from budget year 1982. In fact, Congress and the administration already planned to raise defense spending nearly 30 percent in 1982 over the 1980 level, which had been the basis for Reagan's campaign pledge. By using 1982 (with its higher budget) as the base year, the seven percent "real" growth translated into annual "real" growth of ten percent between 1980 and 1986—higher than anything Reagan had promised. The meeting lasted a half hour, but the sloppy arithmetic added tens of billions of dollars to the defense buildup. Stockman didn't realize the implications for days, and by that time the higher figures had become an official policy from which Weinberger would not budge.

Another mishap occurred in May 1981 when the administration recommended Social Security changes to reduce costs. One proposal involved limiting benefits for early retirement at age 62. Instead of the existing 20 percent penalty in lower benefits, the plan substituted 45 percent. Stockman persuaded the president by reminding him that early retirement hadn't even been in the original Social Security legislation. But the White House meeting was long and confused. Nobody decided on an implementation date. When the plan was announced, the date had been set by staff at the Department of Health and Human Services for January 1, 1982—almost immediately. Someone planning early retirement in a few months would get hundreds of dollars less in monthly benefits than expected. The result was bedlam. Democrats lambasted the White House. Even Reagan supporters were enraged. "My phones are ringing off the hook," one Southern congressman told Stockman. "I've got thousands of sixty-year-old textile workers who think it's the end of the world." Although Stockman had intended to phase in the change, the storm of protests killed the entire Social Security package. More important, the episode convinced Reagan never again to include major Social Security changes in his budget plans.

STOCKMAN also provides a glimpse of the reality of government: the backbiting inside the administration, the frustrations of creating congressional majorities, and the constant campaigns by interest groups to gain or preserve special advantages. But beyond these

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tidbits, his account does little to illuminate budget politics. More than two-thirds of the narrative focuses on Reagan's first year, 1981. Stockman's characters are wooden. He dismisses each one with an inflammatory phrase or two. Ex-treasury secretary Donald Regan (now White House chief of staff) is blustering and power-hungry: "He was determined to prevail for the sake of prevailing—even if it meant advocating nonsense." Defense Secretary Weinberger equates a powerful military with an expensive military: "Cap the Knife [a nickname from Weinberger's days as budget director in the early 1970s] had become Cap the Shovel." Most congressmen are scum of the earth, interested only in securing grants and other favors for their constituents. Mario Biaggi of New York, for example, is "an urban Democrat who knew nothing about the fiscal equation, and his snout was buried up to his eyes in the trough." These descriptions may be accurate as far as they go, but they don't go very far. They don't give much sense of these characters as people. To Stockman, they're just two-bit actors in his morality play.

The same is true of the president. Stockman's conventional portrait of Reagan depicts a perpetual optimist who disdains detail and difficult decisions. In case anyone missed the favorite Reagan anecdote about the boy who welcomes a roomful of manure for Christmas, Stockman repeats it. Reagan, in Stockman's account, keeps expecting the pony—an easy solution to the deficit—to emerge. The president continued to cling, for example, to the myth that eliminating government fraud, waste, or inefficiency would result in major savings. Reagan liked to recall that when he was governor of California, clerks in one agency spent hours folding records because the filing cabinets were too small for the agency's documents. "We just ordered new metal cabinets which were twice as wide," Reagan is quoted as saying, "so the records would fit without folding."

BUT STOCKMAN never asks the most difficult question of all: Was he himself part of the problem? His understanding of the budget was matched only by his inability to influence Reagan. His youthful intelligence and impatient energy—precisely the qualities that enabled him to master the budget—disqualified him as a Reagan confidant. The alienation was aggravated by Stockman's famous *Atlantic* interviews with William Greider, which showed that Stockman was never able to place loyalty to the president above his own ambitions and obsessions. It was not what he said to Greider that mattered so much as Stockman's peculiar need to confide in someone outside the administration. It was as if the report card on his performance would be written by Greider, not Reagan. As a result, the president was surrounded by two groups of officials: those whom he trusted, but who didn't care much about the substance of government (Regan, former White House chief of staff James Baker, former deputy chief of staff Michael Deaver, and ex-presidential counselor Edwin Meese III); and those who weren't trusted but who cared about policy (Stockman, Baker's deputy Richard Darman, and later, economist Martin Feldstein). If, say, George Shultz had been budget director or treasury secretary, might events have turned out differently?

IN THE END, of course, a president is responsible for his advisers, not the reverse. Although Stockman's descriptions are superficial, they're often accurate. Ever since the 1984 election, Reagan has essentially ignored the budget, even at the cost of his own policies. In 1985 the Senate Republican leadership struggled to produce substantial cuts in the deficit, mostly through domestic spending cuts. Had Reagan accepted a modest tax increase, the measure could have easily passed with the support of conservative Democrats. But Reagan stayed aloof, and the pet programs of key Republican senators had to be restored to win enough votes for passage. The president didn't even embrace the modified measure, which subsequently collapsed. In the end Congress sharply cut Reagan's defense buildup and even now is edging closer to the tax increase that Reagan says he will veto. Stockman considered last year's effort to deal with the deficit the most serious in his five years. But his book covers the episode in five pages and does nothing to explain the White House's baffling behavior.

Still, if the president has suffered politically, it's not obvious. The deficits pose the classical political problem of pains that must be suffered in the present for little apparent reward. At best, the immediate adverse economic consequences of large deficits are uncertain. In 1981 and 1982 it was said that deficits would (through high interest rates) prevent a recovery. Well, the re-

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covery occurred. Later the prognosis was that deficits would hold up interest rates and the dollar's exchange rate. Both have declined. As events confounded dire predictions, including Stockman's, the impetus to deal with deficits dwindled. Stockman is correct that large deficits cannot safely persist indefinitely, just as high inflation could not. Ultimately, a society consumes roughly what it produces. If government takes more, someone else will have less. Future taxes will rise, inflation will erode the value of government bonds, or private investment will be squeezed. But the long-term effects do not become obvious instantly, and they can be offset—in the short run—by changes in the business cycle or trade balance. The day of reckoning can be postponed, and that's what Reagan's done.

THE DEFICITS raise simple questions: What's national government for, and how much of it do Americans want? Many of the spending cuts Stockman proposed as budget director make sense. Amtrak does not serve a crucial national need, nor do subsidies for mass transit, local theater, or urban development. Even cutting them—and assuming a leveling off of the defense buildup—would not balance the budget without higher taxes. But to say, as Stockman now does, that the public has ratified the existing level (and composition) of government spending is silly. To be sure, there is almost no desire to dismantle the welfare state, if that means Social Security, Medicare, and programs aiding the poor. But does most of the public support every program that survived Stockman's assault, from the Small Business Administration to dairy subsidies? The answer is unclear, especially if the alternative is higher taxes. To cover today's deficit exclusively by taxes would easily require the equivalent of a 20 percent income tax increase. Stockman now argues that programs that have been preserved by Congress reflect the "preferences of the electorate," while dismissing the view of Reagan (at this moment, the most popular president since World War II) that most Americans don't want a tax increase. A safer, more ambiguous judgment is that there's a stalemate between Americans as a collection of interest groups and as individual citizens.

The contradiction is now an endemic condition of politics. The preferences of many small groups may produce government that displeases most Americans. It's no accident that, along with budget deficits, tax reform preoccupies Congress. Almost everyone agrees that the income tax system is too complicated and inefficient. But it has (so far) survived because the allegiances of individual groups to particular tax preferences neutralizes the broader-based discontent. Spending programs and tax preferences spawn similar politics. Changing the status quo creates winners and losers. Because the losers always know who they are and the winners aren't sure, there's immense inertia in the status quo, even if it's not widely popular. The affected groups are, of course, real people: farmers dependent on subsidies, Amtrak travelers, home-owner beneficiaries of the mortgage deduction. Change clearly hurts. But accommodating splintered pressures in the name of political pragmatism may produce government that loses public support. And there's the slippery question of economic impact. Although the original supply-side economics was simplistic—promising that reduced taxes would ignite unprecedented economic growth—the wrong kind of taxes or too much spending can surely hurt the economy.

IN EFFECT, the Founding Fathers' logic has been overturned. They envisioned a system of limited government, disciplined by a fragmentation of political power. Passing any measure would require a coalition of interest groups, which would be difficult to create. But the idea of government as an engine of economic growth discredited limited government. The logic of interest-group politics then fostered coalitions that supported new spending and tax programs. Now that government hasn't generated faster economic growth, the same politics frustrates efforts to set new limits. That's what the 1980s' struggles have been all about. Inflation could be reduced, because although its suppression created winners and losers, there was no ongoing referendum. The Federal Reserve could pursue a policy that had broad support, even if it hurt specific groups—farmers, debtors, factory workers. But changing the budget and tax system does involve a constant referendum that requires building coalitions from groups that don't want change. The pity is that Stockman is no longer interested in struggling with these problems.

Almost nobody may want a revolution in government, but government is being forced to change, and it can do so for better or for worse. Facing limits, it needs standards that distinguish between legitimate public purposes and those that serve mainly private interests. The standards may be vague and often violated, but without them government becomes corrupted. A program (or tax preference) becomes legitimate because it exists. When the public's tolerance for taxation is reached, limited revenues get spread too thin. The most and least necessary programs are treated the same. That's the thrust of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings balanced-budget law, and it's a formula for mediocre government. But Stockman can't be bothered with trying to grope toward a sensible public philosophy that reconciles a constructive role for government with everyday politics. Having applied his own energies to the budget, he now fatalistically views most programs as immortal. For practical purposes, they can't be changed. He doesn't much care that this binds government to the past and makes it difficult to accommodate new perceptions of national need.

The latest version of Stockman's Truth is born of frustration. One senses in his continual personal odyssey that he never gains the acceptance or success he's looking for. He recounts a confrontation with former Senate majority leader Howard Baker, a man for whom Stockman has great respect. To one Stockman comment, Baker turned and snapped: "Don't you ever, *ever* lecture me again on how to run the United States Senate." And Stockman then meekly adds: "Until [that] moment, I had thought Baker took me seriously. . . ." For four-and-a-half years Stockman struggled, but one senses that he was always an outsider and that, by his own harsh self-appraisal, he knows that much of his effort was wasted. The book is an attempt to be taken seriously: to convince the world to see things his way. If Stockman can't master the budget, well then no one can. That's the Truth, but it is not the whole truth, and his attempt to prove that it is ends up as a political tantrum.

STOCKMAN tried to be the ultimate rationalist in government, but his new version of the Truth is as rigid as his previous infatuations. The idea that he cannot grasp is that change—in people's thinking as well as in the political process or the budget—is messy, sometimes invisible, incomplete, and always unending. People do accommodate to new ex-

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periences, ideas, and pressures. What's remarkable, perhaps, is that even without presidential leadership, some members of Congress still struggle to deal with the deficit. Government is about choices, and they do matter. But for Stockman it's heroic change or nothing. He isn't interested in modest improvements of an imperfect world. Having dreamed about making a revolution, he now wants to make money. It's another of his phases. This book may do it for him, but that's all it will do.

ROBERT J. SAMUELSON

Robert J. Samuelson writes a column on economic affairs for *Newsweek*.

ZIONISM EXAMINED

Conflicts and Contradictions by Meron Benvenisti

(Villard Books, 210 pp., $15.95)

Meron Benvenisti's book is angry and sad. It is conceived as a confrontation with a God that failed: the accepted Zionist dream. And in fact it is not really an analysis of Israeli society, or of the Arab-Israeli conflict, although relations between Israelis and Palestinians are at the core of Benvenisti's argument. More than anything else, the book is an autopsy of an ideology, one man's act of mourning for what seemed like a vital and humane utopia. The analysis is, of course, specific to Jewish fate and history, but such a reaction to the corruption of revolutionary ideals also has a universal quality. "Everything starts in mysticism and ends in politics," the French Catholic poet and ideologist Charles Péguy once wrote. This, according to Benvenisti, has happened to Zionism too. He agonizes about the why and the how of it. For an Israeli, his arguments—indeed the issue itself—will not be entirely unfamiliar. Still, such confrontations have a personal tone, a ring of authenticity, which makes each one of them, in a sense, new.

Some of the questions asked by Benvenisti may be considered sacrilegious. "As Zionist ideology assumed a central role in Jewish identity," he writes, "doubts about it amount to the negation of Jewish consciousness." To express such doubts is not an easy task for any Jew, certainly not for one born in Eretz Israel to parents who, each in his and her own way, were faithful molders of the basic tenets of the Zionist vision. Meron Benvenisti is old enough to have been "present at the creation," that is, old enough to remember the end of the British Mandate and the creation of Israel in 1948. His first war was not the War of Independence, however, but the Sinai campaign of 1956. He does not belong, then, to the "Palmach generation," those who fought for the creation of the state. This difference in age between himself and his "older brothers" of the 1948 generation may well have helped him in reaching the critical standpoint of the insider-outsider he has become.

The first part of Benvenisti's book, its most convincing part, discusses the disintegration of two of Zionism's central ideals, *Moledeth* and *Hagshama*. *Moledeth*, or homeland, and the love of the homeland, is at the core of it all. Benvenisti's father, a geographer, was one of the architects of *Moledeth*, changing Arab names into Hebrew ones, reshaping the symbolic map of the country. In stark terms, Benvenisti sums up his view of the debasement of the essential and vital idea of *Moledeth*:

> Our boundless preoccupation with the physical landscape, and our perception of the Arabs as objects in that landscape, unwittingly contributed to the loss of humanitarian values. With our adulation of development, our habit of attaching transcendental values to human creations in concrete and steel, to every grove of trees planted, we paved the way to a new form of Jewish paganism, and for an exotic growth of believers in the End of the Days. Our obsession with instilling *Moledeth*, together with our negligence of equally cherished values such as the brotherhood of man, so-

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cial justice and civil equality to all, have lead inexorably to chauvinism and xenophobia.

For Benvenisti, as for many others, the development of such chauvinism and xenophobia was not inescapable; but nobody had the courage to cry halt in time. The Six-Day War was the turning point. The occupation of densely populated Arab land—in a war of self-defense, to be sure—accelerated trends that already existed in Israeli political culture. As Benvenisti shows, the inability to stop in time, the new strength of chauvinism since 1967, is deeply linked to the second major principle of Zionism, of socialist Zionism really—*Hagshama*, or "realization."

Benvenisti correctly assesses this drive for the concrete realization of the collective dream as almost unparalleled in any other secular society. The ideal was not simply the construction of an open society, he observes, but pioneer activism, the settlement of the land. This was best achieved by the establishment of kibbutzim, in which *Hagshama* found both its symbolic and concrete embodiment. And as the kibbutz ideal grew more and more obsolete, the thrust of *Hagshama* was turned toward the creation of different physical facts: "Our dream was translated into quantifiable units: so many new schools and factories opened, the expansion of commerce, the development of tourism. . . . Nationalism had replaced socialism as the motivating force."

Thus, by not recognizing the changing patterns of reality—by not seeing the deeper implications of the situation created by the victory of the Six-Day War—Zionism, according to Benvenisti, allowed "dark forces to usurp its revered symbols . . . and turn enlightened, moral and progressive ideas into reactionary beliefs and immoral deeds."

Up to this point it is possible to read Benvenisti's account with some sympathy. When he moves to a more concrete assessment of the post-1967 situation, dealing in some detail with the question of Jerusalem and the West Bank, taking into account his own personal experience as deputy mayor of Jerusalem and a specialist on West Bank matters, his argument becomes somewhat less convincing. A reader familiar with the Israeli scene will recognize that Benvenisti has personal axes to grind; and, for any reader, his failure to offer specific proposals weakens, if not his credibility, then the significance of what he has to say.

Sometimes Benvenisti is less than fair to those who are on his own side of the barricade, but with whom he disagrees. For instance, he caricatures Israeli liberals, many of whom share his analysis and his alarm, as simpletons who believe that the conflict with the Palestinians can be solved merely in terms of civil rights: "The struggle for civil rights and equality [of the Arabs]," he writes,

> is very appealing. It is also safe, because it does not clash with the Israeli national consensus. It also shows how a "manageable" solution can be reached by a convenient perception of the problem. One defines for the minority its grievances and works to bring about remedies. But, alas, the minority itself never defines itself as second-class citizens. . . . The Arabs seek self-government rather than good government; they are not interested in a larger slice of the pie—they want to bake their own. . . . Israeli civil libertarians cannot participate in that struggle; they are unable to identify with the basic political grievance of the Arabs because it contradicts their own cherished national posture. They cannot admit to themselves that the basic inequality lies in their imposed regime, that their system is based on their coercion.

This is a rather distorted image of the condition of Israeli liberalism. Nobody denies that the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is a national one, that only at the national level is a solution to be searched for. This does not mean, however, that meanwhile one should keep silent in the face of abuses of civil rights in the occupied territories.

Anyway, when it comes to specific proposals, it is Benvenisti who dodges the issue. He preempts the argument of those who (as he correctly foresees) will ask him for concrete suggestions by declaring that no overall solutions can be proposed. This may be correct. But even his remarks on Jerusalem are mere generalities:

> A different approach [from that of establishing a comprehensive plan] is now sorely needed. It should be a gradual process in the course of which the parties will be called upon to make only those decisions that seem to them reasonable within the framework of their perceptions. They should be faced with a series of clear and legitimate choices, each involving specific action that they are capable of making and which will render desirable results. A choice, presented now, between Jerusalem and peace is clearly illegitimate in the eyes of the Israelis and will be rejected. A choice between further deterioration of internal security or some concessions to the local inhabitants would seem fair.

This hardly satisfies.

Perhaps the problem lies not in Benvenisti's generalizations, but in the situation itself. For example, with the recent murder of Mayor Zafar al-Masri of Nablus, the search for moderate Arab partners for negotiations who might also be acceptable to the PLO has suffered a terrible (and tragically familiar) blow. On the one hand, it is hard to see in what direction a move toward peace should now be made. On the other hand, the continuing occupation of the West Bank deepens even further the corruption of some of the basic Zionist ideas and ideals, which Benvenisti clearly analyzes in the first part of his book.

For some, all of this may be a matter of time, of ordinary politics, of muddling through, of compromise. But the muddling through could remain bloody for many more decades. And the compromise will certainly not fulfill anybody's idealism. Still, some moderates would argue, this is what the Jews' return to history should amount to. To ask for more may be naive. Others, though—Meron Benvenisti, for example—may feel overwhelmed by a feeling of hopelessness. For hopelessness is the undertone, the controlling emotion, of Benvenisti's book. Thus, in its last lines, he relates that in Belfast, together with a Catholic friend, he attended a play dealing with the substitution of an English map of Ireland for the original—"the ultimate symbol of possession." When Benvenisti mentioned to his friend that the Israelis, too, were trying to change names, to translate and thereby to create a new reality, he was confronted with a pause, and then with the words: "Well, if that's the case, may God have mercy on you all."

SAUL FRIEDLÄNDER

Saul Friedländer is the author most recently of *Reflections on Nazism: An Essay on Death and Kitsch* (Harper & Row).

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THE PRINCE OF PARADOX

More Letters of Oscar Wilde edited by Rupert Hart-Davis

(Vanguard Press, 215 pp., $14.95)

It is virtually impossible to write about Oscar Wilde without invoking his quintessential self-critique spoken (note: not written) to André Gide: "Would you like to know the great drama of my life? It is that I've put my genius into my life; I've only put my talent into my works." If this is so, and many who knew him have corroborated it—though Wilde would have been pleased, I'm sure, to hear it contradicted—we must be doubly grateful for *More Letters of Oscar Wilde*, a supplement to Rupert Hart-Davis's marvelous edition of the *Letters of Oscar Wilde*, published in 1962, now regrettably out of print.

For if the spontaneous Wilde is to be preferred to the premeditated or literary Wilde, a new collection of his correspondence should be particularly welcome. (Not that such a distinction, as Richard Ellmann warns, "could . . . be so finely drawn; his writings plagiarized from his conversation, and his conversation from his writings.") The letter writer, after all, is closer to the talker than to the author, especially when you consider that no conversationalist ever became famous without being a great monologuist. In his recollections, Sir William Rothenstein, the painter and friend of Wilde, notes:

> The great talkers I have heard—Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, George Moore, Bernard Shaw, Yeats, James Stephens, Ralph Hodgson—have been monologuists. It is right they should be so . . . there is a kind of creative talk which should not be interrupted.

More Letters comprises only 215 loosely filled pages, of which a mere 160 are taken up with letters (although the two short essays in the appendix, 19 pages in all, are remarkable in their own right). It is a mere pittance compared to the feast of the *Letters*. But a toothsome pittance it is, even if these letters cannot be called major, with the single exception of the one to the actor-manager George Alexander, shrewdly instructing him on how to stage some parts of *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

A fascinating aspect of this collection is that it cuts swiftly across all phases of Wilde's life save the very earliest, permitting us to follow the revolution of the wheel of fortune in a cinematic, speeded-up motion. But what prevents the letters from reading like a mere postscript to *A Myrrour for Magistrates* is their almost unfailing good humor. Barring the odd gripe and passing fulmination (usually at Smithers, the publisher, for not sending a promised check), everything, even the cadging, is done with forthrightness and grace. Besides, as Evelyn Waugh remarked apropos of the *Letters*, "The reviewers complain there are too many pleas for money, but the poor beast was penniless."

The first, and briefest, section (1875-78) contains letters from Oxford. The next section (1879-81) spans the early London years in which Wilde was slowly making his journalistic reputation. Here, as throughout the book, Rupert Hart-Davis's notes tactfully provide just the right amount of information. We find Wilde gushing about Greats (i.e., Classics), in which he took a first at "the only fine school at Oxford . . . where one can be, *simultaneously*, brilliant and unreasonable. . . ." This echoes the future publisher George Macmillan's appraisal of Oscar as both nonsensical and sensible. Indeed, Wilde was at no time of his life only one or the other, but always an enchanting and irritating mixture of the two.

Next comes the lecture tour of America in 1882, where Oscar dazzled, provoked, and by and large, charmed the colonials. He would appear in "black velvet with lace," attire "suitable for . . . the last century," arousing with word and deed "the excitement of some strong people at the colour of my necktie, the fear of the [American] eagle that I have come to cut his barbaric claws with the scissors of culture, the impotent rage of the ink-stained, the noble and glorious homage of the respectable"—the latter going so far as to name a school of design in Philadelphia for him. Too bad the adventures among the miners of Colorado do not figure here, but all in all, we get a good enough picture of the fellow whom Eleanor Marx, Karl's daughter, described at this time as "that very limp and very nasty young man . . . who has been making such a d.d ass of himself in America."

In the 1883-90 section Wilde continues his lectures on literature, art, and aesthetics in England, publishes poetry and more literary journalism, edits a women's magazine, and rises to fame. He is now consulted on literary matters, and dispenses sound advice. He compliments one writer on perfectly combining "simplicity and strangeness," and warns another that parody requires, "oddly enough, a love of the poet whom it caricatures." The wit, too, is in full swing.

It is between 1891 and 1895 that Wilde's letters, reflecting their author's career in its apogee, become most Wildean. The style now achieves that wittiness based on the most serious treatment of the absurd and the most prankish juggling of paradox. Wilde explains to the princess of Monaco why he missed her soiree: "I am still almost without voice, and without voice one cannot even listen with appreciation." In a letter to Smithers from the final period in France (c. December 28, 1898), Wilde complains about Robert Ross, his friend, first lover, and literary executor: "I am always rebuking him for his idleness, which I attribute entirely to his early hours." In the same month he writes Laurence Housman from La Napoule about the local fishermen. They "have beautiful eyes, crisp hair of a hyacinth colour, and no morals: an ideal race. I have two special friends . . . both quite perfect, except that they can read and write." And this advice concerning Housman's young lover, who has fallen sick: "I think a little want of sympathy would make him well: it has a wonderful effect on invalids."

We have, then, examples of both varieties of epigrams G. K. Chesterton perceived in his 1909 review of Wilde's works:

> One might go through his swift and sparkling plays with a red and blue pencil marking two kinds of epigrams; the real epigram which he wrote to please his own wild intellect, and the sham epigram which he wrote to thrill the very tamest part of our tame civilization.

Chesterton distinguishes between sayings like "Nothing survives being thought of," which he considers an example of the nobler sort of nonsense with an idea in it, and ones like "A well-tied tie is the first serious step in life," which he

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calls rubbish spoken by a charlatan.

The Wildean epigram, first of all, is a form of exaggeration. In one of his last letters here, we find Wilde telling Ross: "I am now *neurasthenic*. My doctor says I have all the symptoms. It is comforting to have them *all*, it makes one a perfect type." An exaggeration, however, that subverts the established and the customary. So too, illiteracy becomes a form of perfection if, as Chesterton all but concurs, thought is destructive—at the very least of unclouded beauty not meant to be sicklied over by the pale cast of thought. And what of Ross's idleness stemming from his "early hours"? Chesterton would surely have blue-penciled that one. Yet isn't living an orderly, early-rising, workaday life precisely what militates against the creation of nonchalant, mischievous, Wildean art?

But what exactly is the epigram, or paradox, this thing that James Joyce, in a 1909 Italian newspaper article on Wilde, called "his restless thought that proceeds by sophisms rather than syllogisms"? It is a mode of subversion by an inversion of values that seems to be ultimately connected to another form of inversion: homosexuality. With the paradoxical epigram, the homosexual tweaks the establishment's nose, turns the heterosexual world arsy-varsy with a vengeance, and once upside down, the top man is no higher than the bottom dog. In his *Recollections of Oscar Wilde* (1932), the painter Charles Ricketts explains the Wildean propensity for epigrams as "the recoil of one who had met with hostility or derision when he had wished to charm." That is oversimplification, but the retaliatory aspect is undeniable, and the clever inversion of values can be found in the works of such homosexual writers as Norman Douglas and Ronald Firbank, Joe Orton and Terrence McNally, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault.

Why is this kind of subversion so resonant? I doubt it has much to do with Joyce's explanation that it represents "the truth inherent in the soul of Catholicism: that man cannot reach the divine heart except through that sense of separation and loss called sin." Two other factors seem more relevant. First, in a relativized universe, we are compelled to perceive some truth in the opposite of everything. "He was an ingenious man," Borges wrote about Wilde in *Other Inquisitions*, "who was also right." Once we have become committed, for better or worse, to seeing the other side of every question, Wilde's minority view—that loyal opposition—must also be taken into account, and may be found to contain, as Chesterton argued, some useful truth.

As Borges noted, "the fundamental spirit of [Wilde's] work is joy." It is the joy of exaggeration, which Wilde described so seductively in his glowing review of Pater's *Appreciations* (March 22, 1890):

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

> It is possible, of course, that I may exaggerate about [the essays]. I certainly hope that I do; for where there is no exaggeration there is no love, and where there is no love there is no understanding. It is only about the things that do not interest one, that one can give a really unbiassed opinion; and this is no doubt the reason why an unbiassed opinion is always absolutely valueless.

Here is the paradox enlisted in defense of the paradox, the epigram as its own epigrammatic justification.

The last significant letter from the prelapsarian period of Wilde's life is the one to Ross from Algiers (c. January 25, 1895), where Oscar had gone with "Bosie" Douglas on a flagrantly homosexual escapade involving Arab boys. Wilde writes:

> There is a great deal of beauty here. The Kabyle boys are quite lovely. At first we had some difficulty in procuring a proper civilised guide. But now it is all right and Bosie and I have taken to haschish: it is quite exquisite: three puffs of smoke and then peace and love. Bosie wakes up at night and cries like a child for the best haschish.
>
> We have been [on] an excursion into the mountains of Kabylia—full of villages peopled by fauns. Several shepherds fluted on reeds for us. We were followed by lovely brown things from forest to forest. The beggars here have profiles, so the problem of poverty is easily solved. . . .
>
> The most beautiful boy is said by the guide to be "deceitful": isn't it sad? Bosie and I are awfully upset about it.

This little prose poem in the style of Wilde's later *Poems in Prose* could serve as the starting point for both a stylistic analysis and a psycho-philosophical study of Wilde's life. Suffice it to note that it is the obverse of the epigram: though equally manipulative, it inverts existence not into ironic paradox but into poetic fantasy, into bittersweetly sentimental fairy tale.

The next section, "Reading, 1895-97," shows that Wilde's good humor and wit did not forsake him even in jail. Thus Wilde writes his solicitor that he would rather not have to sign a document while still in prison "as 'residing in Reading Gaol,' an address, which, however admirable from an ethical point of view, will not, I trust, be permanent. . . ." In 1905 Max Beerbohm observed of Wilde, "Even 'from the depths' he condescended," and "enjoyed the greater luxury of condescending to himself." And condescend to himself he does when he writes, "I don't know what to do with my money except to throw it away," and refers to "my halcyon days, which did me, I dare say, a lot of harm." Always there was Wilde's generosity: a letter from a kindly warden relates how Wilde refused offers of contraband food because its smuggling in might imperil the benefactor.

The book's three final sections—"Berneval," "Naples," "Paris"—exhibit self-criticism ("I feel that while there is much that I have lost, still there was much that was not worth keeping"), incurable romanticism in his persistent love for the unworthy Lord Alfred ("our souls touch in myriad ways through the estranging air"), and above all, the old wit. When

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Wilde accidentally smudges one of the autographed copies of *The Importance of Being Ernest*, he declares, "As I have initialled the smudge, it must count as a *remarque*. You might ask one and sixpence extra for that copy." (In 1981 the smudged copy was to fetch $8,500 at auction.)

Still, for all their good humor, these last letters are saddening. The man who was generous enough to pay half the £200 fine incurred by an obscure anarchist poet ("Whatever I did was merely what you would have done for me. . . .") was obliged to panhandle relative strangers for 50 francs. His own generosity—and recklessness—continued unabated. When in 1898 Wilfred Hugh Chesson mentioned Emile Verhaeren to him, Wilde exclaimed, "Oh! now you mention the greatest living poet." And well he might praise the Belgian who wrote that "to live is to take and give with joy," and also, *"Il faut aimer pour découvrir avec génie."* Certainly Wilde had given gladly and was taking equally gladly now that he was, in his own words, dying as he had lived: beyond his means. But he had also loved intensely enough to discover with genius. He indignantly responded to Chesson's attempt to console him with "the life of the spirit": "There is no hell but this: a body without a soul, or a soul without a body." It is right that he died before he was quite reduced to either alternative—before we could have applied to him what he said of one of his revered masters: "Poor dear Pater has lived to disprove everything he has written."

JOHN SIMON

John Simon is a drama critic for *New York* magazine and a film critic for *National Review*.

THE PROPHET IN HISTORY

Jesus and Judaism
by E. P. Sanders

(Fortress, 444 pp., $19.95)

Jesus was not a Christian. Recognition of this fact—the starting point for all modern critical reconstructions of the historical Jesus—has brought with it two complications. It obscures the relation of cause (that is, Jesus) and effect (the Church), and it underscores precisely how difficult and misleading our major sources for such a reconstruction, the New Testament Gospels, really are.

The Gospels stand at too many removes, both temporal and cultural, from their ostensible subject, Jesus of Nazareth, to offer reliable evidence. Jesus preached in Aramaic to fellow Jews in the Galilee and Judaea about the coming Kingdom of God. He was executed by the Roman authorities for sedition—as were countless other Jews in this period of imperial expansion—around the year 30. But the written accounts preserved in the New Testament come from Greek-speaking, predominantly gentile communities in the Diaspora some 40 to 70 years after Jesus' crucifixion. By that time, both for religious reasons (the Christian conviction that Jesus had been raised from the dead) and political ones (the complete degeneration of Jewish/Roman relations, which led to the bloody Jewish revolt of 66-73), much in the early tradition had been reinterpreted, not least of all the figure of Jesus himself.

Thus, while glimpses of the charismatic Jewish prophet remain, the Gospels present a different Jesus, someone who stands outside and occasionally against the institutions and traditions of Judaism; whose crucifixion marks the limits not of Rome's tolerance, but of Israel's. This Jesus, in brief, is not Jewish but Christian. Confronted by such evidence—the best he has—what is the historian to do?

Reason historically, exhorts Oxford scholar E. P. Sanders, and this—lucidly, provocatively, persuasively—is what he proceeds to do in *Jesus and Judaism*. Others before him, of course, have attempted to do just this. But Sanders, while generously praising their efforts, also astutely assesses their results, and often finds them wanting. Most studies, he remarks, begin by focusing on Jesus as preacher and teacher, and then move immediately to define the core of his message. Such an effort at reconstructing Jesus' message leads to a scholarly dependence on "pleasant theological abstractions": thus, Jesus preached that God was a loving and merciful Father who forgave sinners and preferred mercy to sacrifice. He thereby astounded and offended his listeners, who rejected him and his message, and ultimately plotted his death through the agency of Rome.

The problem with this reconstruction, Sanders observes, is that it does not work. Such a message in the context of first-century Judaism would hardly have come as news to Jesus' audience. By that time the Jews as a people had already been composing and preserving scriptures and creating liturgies embodying their faith in such a God for almost a millennium. Nor does it seem credible that Jews in general or Pharisees in particular would have been so affronted by someone preaching that message that they would feel compelled to kill him. On the contrary, "If Jesus, by eating with tax collectors [paradigmatic sinners in the Gospel accounts], led them to repent, repay those whom they had robbed, and leave off practicing their profession, he would have been a national hero."

So how does such a reconstruction come to seem historically valid? Only by creating a contrast between Jesus and his native religion. This, as Sanders exposes patiently and with acerbic intelligence, is precisely the anachronistic account developed in much New Testament scholarship, which in essence continues the hostile caricature of Jesus' Jewish contemporaries begun by the evangelists. The view that "Jesus believed in grace, he opposed the Pharisees for being legalistic and believing in merit . . . and [that] this conflict was a major cause of his execution," says Sanders,

> . . . is manufactured out of whole cloth, but it seems to be the most common. It seems to arise from the following sequence: first Christianity is defined as consisting of a set of religious abstractions . . . ; then those abstractions are denied to its parent; then this supposed theological disagreement is retrojected into the life of Jesus and made the pivot on which the story turns. The view that Jesus died for grace thus ends with sheer invention about what would constitute an issue in first-century Judaism. . . . This line is basically opposed to seeing Jesus as a first-century Jew, who thought like others, spoke their language, was concerned about things which concerned them, and got into trouble over first-century is-

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sues. It is thus bad history. Though I am no theologian I suspect that it is bad theology.

What Sanders offers instead is good history—clearly stated hypotheses, expressed presuppositions, critically considered evidence, prudent and plausible conclusions. He proceeds by sifting through an enormous amount of material, both ancient (Josephus, Philo, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Mishnah, and the Bible) and modern, and then applies the insights and information gleaned from this examination to the Gospels. Leading the reader step by step, he ultimately sorts his conclusions into categories. In the realm of "certain or virtually certain" deductions, he places the notion that Jesus, like many of his contemporaries, believed the current order was about to end, to be superseded by the eschatological Kingdom of God. It is "highly probable," Sanders argues, that Jesus' disciples thought of him as a king, a role he accepted, whether implicitly or explicitly; hence the strong and early tradition of the designation "messiah," though it is "probable" that Jesus did not always use the word "kingdom" with precisely the same meaning. Moreover, it is "possible" that Jesus may have conceived of the Kingdom as a present reality as well as an End-time event. Sanders rates it as "conceivable" that Jesus may have given his own death a martyrological significance. What is "incredible," however, is that Jesus was one of the rare Jews of his day who believed in love, mercy, grace, repentance, and the forgiveness of sin; that Jews in general and Pharisees in particular would kill people who believed in such things; and that as a result of Jesus' work, Jewish confidence in election was "shaken to pieces," Judaism was "shaken to its foundations," and Judaism as a religion was destroyed—all propositions stated recently, alas, in assorted "authoritative" works. One may disagree with all or some of Sanders's conclusions. But thanks to the deliberateness and clarity of his arguments, one never wonders how he arrived at them.

A good hypothesis about the life and teachings of the historical Jesus, Sanders argues, should be able to connect the facts of Jesus' public mission, his execution, and the messianic movement that subsequently and immediately formed in his name. For Sanders, this connection is Jewish restoration theology—the belief that God would redeem exiled Israel, vanquish the unrighteous, raise the dead, and establish forever his Kingdom of peace in which even the gentiles would turn from their idolatry to worship with Israel at "the house of the God of Jacob," the renewed Temple in eschatological Jerusalem. A Jesus who preached this message, who indeed was motivated to preach by his expectation of its imminent fulfillment, would thus join company with other near-contemporary charismatics—John the Baptist, Theudas, and the "Egyptian"—who, preaching this same ostensibly religious message ("The Kingdom of God is at hand"), were persecuted by their governments as political agitators. Rome and Herod were not wrong: few Jews would distinguish between politics and religion, and the message of an impending new order at least implies a condemnation of the present one. But these charismatics—Jesus included—*were* wrong. Redemption as they conceived it was not at hand; the Kingdom did not arrive. Time, and Rome, continued.

WHAT SETS Jesus apart from these other prophets is thus not his message, but rather the movement that grew in the wake of his mission and that, vastly transformed, ultimately became the major cultural and religious force in the West. The Kingdom did not arrive, but the Church did. Yet even this fact, Sanders urges persuasively, attests to the Church's origins in Jewish restoration theology. For at the heart of this transformation of Jesus into Christ lay

BALLADE FOR RICHARD WILBUR

and, thereby, for the Duke of Orléans,
who offered a prize at Blois, circa 1457,
for the best ballade employing the line
"Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine,"
won belatedly by Richard Wilbur with his
poem with the refrain *"I die of thirst, here
at the fountain-side."*

Eagles wheel by the crags where lizards crawl,
Castalia bubbles down the mountainside,
But here, beside the darkened city-wall,
The Genius of the Fountain's dreaded bride,
Smiling, green-eyed, slim-hipped and velvet-thighed,
Spoons up from somewhere in her hidden den
The poisoned waters with which all are plied.
Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine.

De la fontaine . . . the phrase seems to recall
The founts where wisdom spoke to please and guide:
The antic cicada fell dumb in the fall,
The crowing fox was smitten in his pride—
Fables whose faith our novels have denied
Rhyme in inevitable French again.
Athirst for truth where morals multiplied,
Je meurs de soif auprès de La Fontaine.

Young David's meanings struck the maddened Saul
With something more than music, and he died.
Rain from the palace courtyard fills the hall,
Drips into cups where disused shadows hide . . .
Something is rotten in the countryside
Within our sorrows and beyond our ken:
Ills are a deluge, yet our wells have dried.
Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine.

Dick (au lieu du Duc), I have never vied
With you for any prize; yet we're tied, for when
You "die of thirst, here at the fountain-side,"
Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine.

JOHN HOLLANDER

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the belief in his resurrection. And such a belief originates in Jewish eschatological hope, with its message of the resurrection of the dead, the vindication of the righteous, the salvation of the gentiles, and universal redemption. The historian need not posit a Christian Jesus, in other words, to account for the Christian Church. A Jewish Jesus, with Jewish followers who looked forward to the fulfillment of the promise of redemption in their days, both suffices as an explanation and fits with what else we know about Jesus' historical context.

Sanders's economical and simple construction of such a Jesus, in a field where historical evidence is so often subordinated to religious conviction, is a victory for common sense. The prejudicial power of feminism, Marxism, or Whiggery in the writing of history pales in comparison to the orthodoxy that encrusts so much New Testament scholarship—an orthodoxy, indeed *the* Orthodoxy, that formed the very identity of Christendom and, subsequently, of European civilization.

By his salubrious *un*orthodoxy and meticulous scholarship, Sanders brings together in *Jesus and Judaism*, as he did in his earlier path-breaking work *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977), the two golden traditions of this century's New Testament study represented by Albert Schweitzer (*The Quest of the Historical Jesus*) and George Foot Moore (*Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*). Like Schweitzer, Sanders takes seriously the proposition that Jesus was an apocalyptic preacher. Like Moore (and too few New Testament scholars), he can command the Semitic sources as well as the Greek, the better to explore Jesus' native religious context.

Jesus and Judaism is a milestone study, which like all such works marks off both the distance traveled by earlier scholars and the beginning of the next stage. For, as Sanders both argues and demonstrates, theological orthodoxy, that great aid to the formation of cultural identity, has controlled far too much of what passes for historical scholarship. It is time for historians of the New Testament to rise up, awaken from their dogmatic slumbers, and really do history.

PAULA FREDRIKSEN

Paula Fredriksen teaches history of religions at the University of California at Berkeley. Her study *Jesus of Nazareth and the Christs of the Churches* will appear this fall from Editions du Cerf.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

but more for their shock value—more for the terror an attack on such a target would produce. As Paul Nitze recently stated when discussing the use of the atomic bomb on Japan, the "psychological impact of the weapons were far greater than their military consequences." The concept of deterrence in a nuclear age is an extension of this line of thinking and a deterrent is credible only if the outcome of a nuclear exchange would be so cataclysmic as to preclude first use. The fear of such an outcome can be generated only if cities are targeted and innocents placed in jeopardy of annihilation. Placing innocents in such a position may call into question the entire concept of a deterrence that is both workable and moral.

ROBERT L. DI VIZIO
Detroit, Michigan

DIFFERENT 'DRUMMER'

To the editors:

You can put this one in the department of "missed the book; saw the movie." In your May 12 Notebook there was a tidy paragraph titled "Farewell, My Lovely," which amazed me for its inaccuracy. The writer claimed that Charlie in John le Carré's book *The Little Drummer Girl* was an American, that the villain of the book was the Israeli, Kurtz, and that the callousness of all other Israeli characters horrified readers. In fact, Charlie was British, Kurtz was fatherly, and le Carré's sympathetic treatment of the other Israeli characters makes your writer's assertion ridiculous.

TOM FUDGE
St. Paul, Minnesota

POPPED PREDICTION

To the editors:

TRB's recent prediction—"Sometime soon, an influential conservative journal like *Commentary* . . . is going to publish an article titled something like 'What's Wrong with Nuclear Superiority?' [and] . . . someone is going to lose his '*pas devant les enfants*' scruples and say it outright" ("Nuclear Superiority," May 12)—comes a bit late. In the March 1983 issue of *Commentary*, Robert Jastrow, a previously unrenowned professor at Dartmouth and now a cheerleader for the administration's Star Wars program, made his debut onto the public stage with "Why Strategic Superiority Matters." He concluded, "And so we finally see why strategic superiority matters. We see how it is that . . . he who can blow the world up three times has more power than he who can blow it up only once."

Most perceptive critics panned his performance.

E. COREY ROBIN
Princeton, New Jersey

COMRADES FOR SDI?

To the editors:

Regarding "Madder than MAD" by Leon Wieseltier (May 12): If many liberals and intellectuals (or are they interchangeable in your lexicon?) are so positive that the Strategic Defense Initiative will not work and will be a colossal waste of our nation's resources, why do the Russians so vehemently oppose it? One would think they would sit back and chortle with glee at the prospects of our spending ourselves into oblivion chasing an unattainable will-o'-the-wisp. Can it be that Gorbachev is as featherheaded as THE NEW REPUBLIC makes our president out to be, or does he know from Russia's considerable research that SDI is a viable concept?

E. A. RIST
Dundee, Florida

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Boomski

WHEN WILL WE LEARN that the Russians will stop at nothing to ape, and if possible to surpass, our every technological feat? Clearly the Kremlin's shadowy leaders were deeply shaken by the Challenger episode. It captured the world's imagination and monopolized television screens everywhere. Worse, it threatened Soviet dominance in the one area where Soviet technicians have traditionally held an unquestioned lead: incompetence. They put their scientists to work on a round-the-clock basis, and in just 13 weeks, an impressively short time for a project of this magnitude, they unveiled their answer: Chernobyl. It's a masterstroke. Moreover, the Russians' Gypsy Rose Lee methods of information disclosure guarantee steady coverage for months to come. NASA's quickie countermoves—the Titan and Delta disasters—are mere pop-pops by comparison.

THE BIG MELTDOWN will have plenty of side effects—as in that edgy joke about Scandinavians with blue hair and blond eyes—but at least one of them will be salutary: the de-ideologization of the electricity question. In the 1950s and early 1960s, one was "for" nuclear power as a matter of course. Perhaps this was because anything "atomic" was then still associated in the public mind with the kindly, frizz-haloed figure of Albert Einstein. If Einstein invented it, it couldn't be all bad. So everybody wanted to "harness" the "atom," which, once harnessed, would be as great a force for good as the unharnessed version was for harm. To take just one example, the Port Huron Statement, the founding document of Students for a Democratic Society, took it for granted that abundant electricity from nuclear reactors would make possible the decentralized, leisure-filled society of the future. Liberals, conservatives, radicals—everybody liked the stuff. But by the mid-1970s, tastes in electrical generation had been brought under rigidly polarized ideological discipline. Left-wingers were against nuclear energy and right-wingers were for it, possibly because both had it mixed up in their minds with enthusiasm for nuclear weapons. Also, right-wingers saw the issue as another case of liberal whiners and adversary-culture Luddites trying to hobble the free market with a lot of pusillanimous fearmongering and cant about "the balance of nature." The conservative position was always a trifle strained, though, because (a) the technology of nuclear power pretty much requires heavy-handed government regulation and (b) the economics of nuclear power require that the risks (if not the profits) be socialized, since no private insurance company is willing to underwrite any reactor at any price. A few hard-core Heritage types will probably still argue that Chernobyl proves only that government is bad, but the more realistic conservatives will now drop their advocacy of nuclear power, having concluded, along with everybody else, that it has overnight become a turkey next to which Tylenol capsules washed down with Bon Vivant vichyssoise would be an easy sell.

SOME PEOPLE think that Reagan's Libya strike was timed to help the administration corral more votes in Congress for aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*. If indeed that was its purpose, it didn't work. On the contrary, the opportunity the raid afforded members of Congress to thump their chests for one military action made it politically unnecessary for them to support another. "*Contras*? Sorry. I gave at the office." Libya handed Democrats a ready answer to the charge that while in theory they support the idea of using military force under certain circumstances, they never seem to support any *particular* use of force. Not that any such calculation was the only reason, or even a reason, why so many Democrats supported the raid; there were plenty of reasons to support it on the merits. And if there was anything politically fortuitous about the timing, the target was more likely David Stockman than Daniel Ortega. The Stockman book, beginning with the first *Newsweek* excerpt, had begun to create a dangerous frenzy. The political class was in the grip of news mania. The symptoms were unmistakable: overexcitement, mass hyperventilation, continuous use of the telephone, citywide schadenfreude, euphoria. The condition was still wholly confined to the area inside the Beltway, but as experience has shown again and again in recent years, these Washington infections can spread quickly if not dealt with promptly. It was only a matter of days, or at most a couple of weeks, before the whole country would have been talking about Stockman's devastating portrait of a goofy, befuddled president unable to comprehend the most elementary causal connections and surrounded by liars of all kinds. Swift action was needed. Swift action was taken. In this respect, at least, the raid on Libya was truly a surgical strike.

JUDGING FROM THE PRE-REPORT LEAKS, the Rogers Commission investigating the Challenger catastrophe seems to be doing a pretty thorough job. But its work will not be fully done until it clears up certain questions about President Reagan's State of the Union address, which was to have been given on the day of the launch. What references to the Challenger's flight were in the penultimate draft of the speech? What about the subteen "hero" picked to be introduced by Reagan during the peroration on account of having designed an experiment that was on board the shuttle? How many people in the NASA bureaucracy knew about him? Wasn't somebody at NASA in charge of showing that kid around town, taking him to the Air and Space Museum, arranging a hotel room for him? What role, if any, did those who knew about the speech and the kid play in making the decision to launch the Challenger that day? These questions do not imply that there were "improper pressures" from the White House to get Challenger up in a hurry. Proper pressures—the mere awareness at NASA that only if the shuttle went up that day would it be the featured item in the speech—would be explanation enough. Having written the odd State of the Union address myself, I know how anxious federal agencies are to get even the tiniest mention. If an agency knew that all it had to do to get the president of the United States to celebrate its work as a metaphor for national greatness was to brush aside the qualms of a few obscure engineers . . .

H. H.

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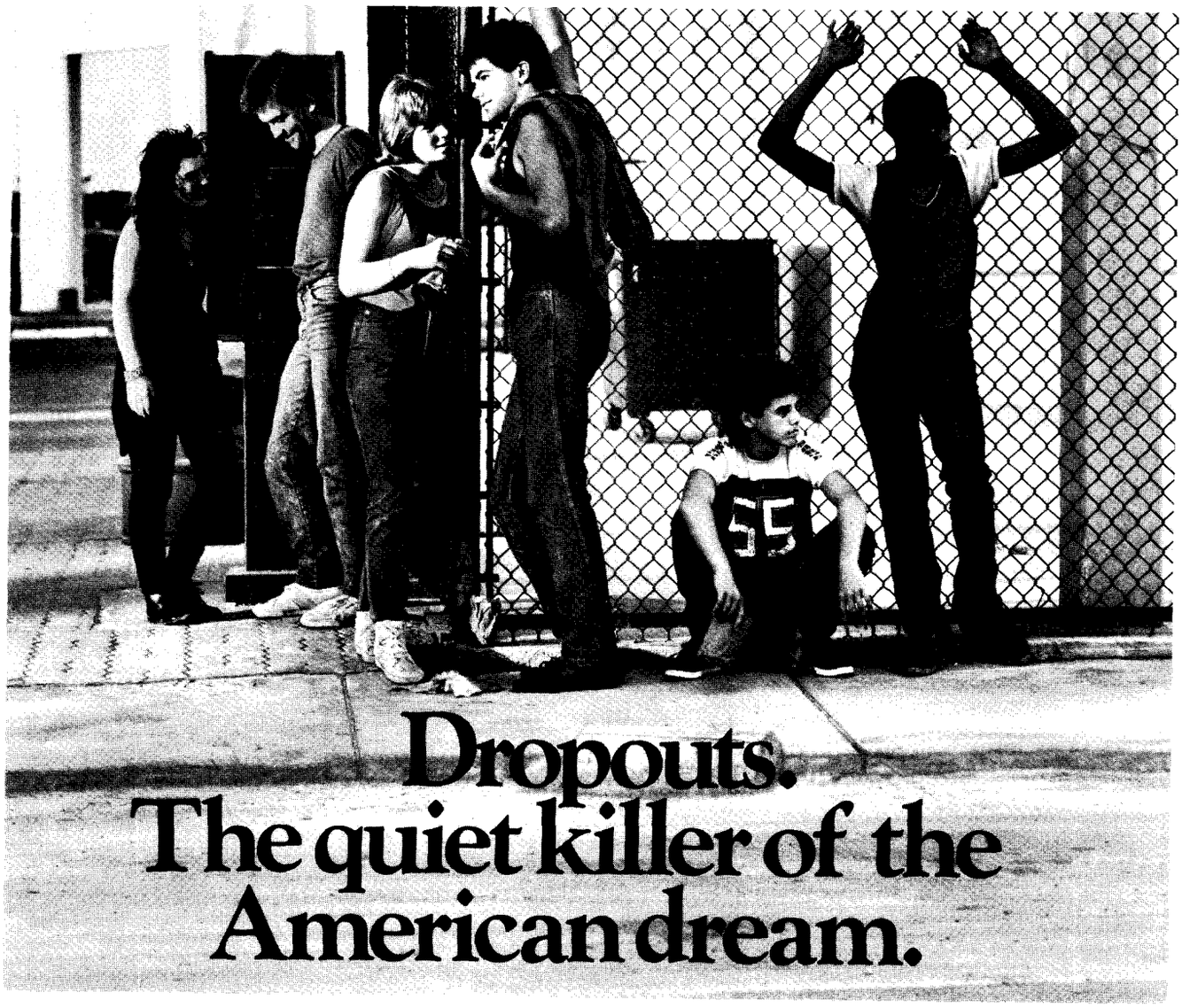

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The remaining $1 million will establish an endowment to make educational excellence grants available to teachers for years to come. And we're asking other concerned groups — both inside and outside education — to join teachers in building this fund. Our aim is to begin funding local dropout prevention programs by the fall of 1986.

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Dwight Knott, Sun Company manager of the Big Horn Ranch and Reclamation Research Center.

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